COACH AND BUS WEEK

The PSV Industry's News Weekly

ISSUE 9 APRIL 18 1992

SOUTER SELLS

Magicbus deal clears decks for Strathclyde takeover

CHESTER BUSES FACING BAN

Thwarted councils plan wholesale pedestrianisation after ambitious light transit plans rejected .....Page 7

SPOT THE BUS MARKET TRENDS

PSV Circle figures contain some of the most detailed information available on bus sales in the UK .....Page 31 & 32

YUGO FOR NEW COACHES

David Bennett's Hamilton Services snatches four Charismas from the jaws of war and finds three more in Belgium.. .....Pages 27 & 28

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Carlton P.S.V.

MINIBUS

1989 PEUGEOT TRIAXLE, 2.5 Diesel, 22 seats, plus 7 standees, Pullman body, Dip-Tac specification, power door, destination box and gear, MoT September '92

VOLVO

1983 VOLVO B10M, 12 metre, 57 seater, Duple Laser, PA/radio/cassette, 6 speed ZF manual gearbox, MoT 15.07.92. Stock No. 1074.
1980 B58 AIR/LEAF/DOMINANT, 12 metre, 53 seats, 48 re-cliners, 5 fixed, automatic g/b, power door, tinted windows, curtains, side lockers, MoT 25.11.92. Stock No. 0012.
1973 B58 PLAXTON SUPREME, 11 metre, 53 re-moquetted seats, X-Press doors, side lockers. Stock No. 1047.

BEDFORD

1975 YRQ PLAXTON, 45 seats, power door, side lockers, private plates. Stock No. 1062.

LEYLAND

1982 DUPLE DOMINANT, 51 reclining seats, 6 speed gearbox, side lockers, MoT March '93. Stock No. 9033.

SCANIA

1986 K112 PLAXTON 3500, 55 reclining seats, demountable toilet, double glazed, retarder, curtains, radio/PA/cassette, MoT March '93. Stock No. 1063.

TOYOTA

1988 OPTIMO, 21 se[illegible] SOLD curtains, radio/cassette, MoT 5.12.92. Stock No[illegible]

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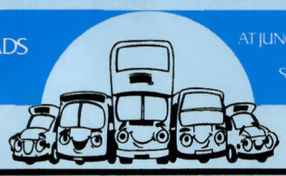

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1981 BEDFORD VAT [illegible] UNICAR, 53 seats, curtains, power door SOLD MoT 4.11.92. Stock No. MO42.
1977 VOLVO B58 DUPLE DOMINANT, 57 seats, curtains, power door, radio, side lockers, MoT 2.3.93. Stock No. MO43.
1989 DENNIS JAVE[illegible] N PARAMOUNT 3200, 53 reclining seats, c[illegible] SOLD [illegible]oor, side lockers, new MoT. Stock No. MO44.
1988 BEDFORD YNV DUPLE 320, 53 seats, power door, radio/cassette, TV, toilet, tinted windows, side lockers, MoT 12.2.93. Stock No. MO45.

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VOLVO 1988 B10M GL JONCKHEERE JUBILEE P599 12M, 53 recliners, grey/red moquette, courier seat, double glazed side windows, white/primrose/blue. CHOICE OF TWO
M.O.T. JAN 1993

FORD 1982 R1114 PLAXTON SUPREME, 53 str., brown moquette, power entrance door, tinted side windows, decorative curtains, side lockers, white/crimson/black
M.O.T. JUNE 1992

FREIGHT ROVER 1988 (310 Diesel) SHERPA, 16 low backed seats, grey moquette, white/orange
M.O.T. FEB 1993

MERCEDES 1985 608D DEVON CONVERSION, 14 full size coach seats recently retrimmed in grey/blue moquette, soft trim casing panels/roof, interior parcel racks, rear boot, twin fuel tanks; TELMA, white.
M.O.T. AUG 1992

BOVA 1986 FUTURA FHD 12.280 INTEGRAL 12M, 49/53 recliners, demountable centre toilet, continental door, berth, AIR CONDITIONING, all white.
M.O.T. APRIL 1992

VOLVO 1987 B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M, 49/53 recliners, grey moquette, demountable centre sunken toilet, continental door, driver's berth, aircraft style lockers to hatracks, wired TV/video, white.
M.O.T. SEPT 1992

BOVA 1988 FUTURA FHD 12.290 INTEGRAL 12M, 49/53 recliners, duo red moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet + continental entrance/exit door, courier seat, double glazed side windows, power entrance door, drinks machine, duo brown/orange.
M.O.T. MARCH 1992

DAF 1985 SB2300 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200 12M, 53 recliners, power entrance door, white/duo blue.
M.O.T. MARCH 1993

DAF 1987 DKVL CAETANO ALGARVE 12M, 49 recliners, duo brown moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental entrance/exit door, courier seat, tinted side windows, TELMA retarder, power entrance door, wired TV/video, white/duo blue.
M.O.T. APRIL 1993

DAF 1982 DKTL PLAXTON SUPREME 12M, 51 recliners red moquette, tinted side windows, curtains, power entrance door, white.
M.O.T. MAY 1992

BOVA 1985 FUTURA FHD 12.280 INTEGRAL 12M, 49/53 str., red moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental entrance/exit door, tinted double glazing, drivers sleeping berth, TELMA, drinks machine, coolbox, white/blue/red.
M.O.T. JAN 1993

VOLVO 1984 B10M DUPLE LASER 12M, 57 str., red moquette, power door, white/blue.
M.O.T. FEB 1993

BEDFORD 1983 PJK DUPLE DOMINANT IV, 29 str., Autumn moquette, power entrance door, TELMA, white/red.
M.O.T. MARCH 1993

MAN 1982 (AUG) SR280 INTEGRAL 12M, 49 str., Autumn moquette, toilet, continental door, VOITH retarder, wired TV/video, white/primrose.
M.O.T. MARCH 1993

DAF 1987 DKVL PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M, 51 recliners, red/grey moquette, rear sunken toilet, continental entrance/exit door, tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, drinks machine, power entrance door, wired for T.V./video, TELMA, ABS anti-lock braking, cream/duo blue.
M.O.T. APRIL 1992

DAF 1986 DKFL PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M, 49/53 recliners, grey/red moquette, demountable rear sunken toilet, continental exit door, courier seat, curtains, power entrance door, wired for T.V./video, cream/duo blue.
M.O.T. FEB 1993

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COACH AND BUS WEEK
The PSV Industry's News Weekly
ISSUE 9 18 APRIL 1992

It was only a week ago that this column warned of the danger that having won the theoretical battle over giving buses priority over other traffic, the industry was in danger of losing the war over bus access to city centres.

While town planners generally like light rapid transit schemes, which involve years of study and tens of millions of pounds of public money, they seem to dislike buses which are seen as generally cheap and downmarket. With its grandiose plans for a light rapid transit scheme rejected, it is no great surprise that Chester should be the latest city to propose banishing buses from its main shopping streets to a bus centre on the margin of the central area.

If implemented, such a ban could have a devastating effect not just on bus operators, but city centre businesses generally. Yet High Street traders are, as past experience in towns such as Harrogate indicates, often vocal in their complaints about buses and passengers cluttering

'If implemented, such a ban could have a devastating effect not just on bus operators, but city centre businesses generally. Yet High Street traders are often vocal in their complaints about buses and passengers cluttering the place up and obstructing their window displays'

the place up and obstructing their window displays. As significant and high profile contributors to the local economy, High Street businesses are virtually guaranteed a sympathetic ear from local politicians and planners, who are often tempted to see a bus ban as an easy fix for a large number of problems.

Bus operators should try to pre-empt these moves by gathering statistics about the number of commuters and shoppers who use buses to access city centre businesses. These statistics can be used at a local level to educate not just politicians and planners but the local business people themselves on the vital role played by the bus.

On a national level, the bus and coach industry is faced with the prospect of having to educate yet another minister of transport on the importance of coaches and buses. The Bus and Coach Council, Association of Metropolitan Authorities and other such seasoned campaigners may feel they have already given Malcolm Rifkind and Roger Freeman their best shots, and that they have nothing fresh to add to the transport debate. That would be wrong. Instead, it's time for the industry to start the education process all over again with John MacGregor, and the vexed issue of city centre bus bans would be as good a place as any to start.

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DIGEST

■ **Chester operators** are outraged by plans by the city and county councils to close critical city centre streets to all vehicles - including buses. The proposed ban follows hard on the heels of the rejection of a £65 million plan to bring light rapid transit to the historic city and will effectively close all cross-city links and prevent penetration of the commercial and shopping area.

■ **Sales of new vehicles** remained depressed during March, with overall registrations down by 10 per cent on the same month last year according to figures released by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders. Full size bus sales were particularly hard .

■ **Sanders of Holt** can now claim to be the largest coach operator in Norfolk, following its takeover of Bammants of Fakenham. The Sanders fleet now numbers 50 Bedfords, with Mercedes and Leyland DAF minibuses and a Dennis Javelin coach taking the total to 63.

■ **West Yorkshire** Passenger Transport Authority is investigating the possibility of a second light rapid transit corridor for Leeds. With corridors in the north and east of the city already earmarked for the government-backed guided busway project and Parliamentary approval secured for the first LRT route in the south, LRT is tipped to be the favoured option for the A660 corridor in the north west.

■ **Rumours** that Stagecoach was clearing the decks prior to a bid for Strathclyde buses hardened when it sold Magicbus, its Glasgow bus operator, to ex SBG concern Kelvin Central.

COACH AND BUS EVENTS:

- British Coach Rally. April 25&26, Brighton. Fax: 081 842 0070.
- TAS seminar: Concessionary Fares and Ticketing. May 6, Birmingham. Tel: 0772 204988.
- UITP Conference. Public Transport: Security and Environment. May 11-13, Paris.
- IRTE: 23rd Annual Conference and Display. May 14&15, Telford. 071 589 3744.
- Sign UK 92. June 16-18, NEC. Tel: 0707 376816.
- Accessible Transport '92. June 25&26, Twickenham Conference Centre. Tel: 081 748 3020.
- BCC Annual Conference. October 30-November 1, Eastbourne. Tel: 071 831 7546.

■ BUS

GMB escapes Albu action

NORTH Western Traffic Commmissioner, Martin Albu, has taken no action against GM Buses, after considering allegations by rival Citibus Tours that minibuses were being deliberately run in front of its buses to deprive them of passengers.

But the commissioner warned GM Buses that he considers 'composite services' - ie services running partly on one registration and partly on another - to be unlawful. He indicated that he would be prepared to waive the 42 days notice period if GMB sought to register those services currently being operated in that way.

Though finding that there was insufficient evidence that a GMB inspector had "physically interfered" with a Citibus bus, after he had allegedly stood in front of it and directed a minibus parked alongside past and into a stop, Mr Albu issued a general warning that inspectors must not interfere with other operators' buses. And that queuing buses must be allowed on to a stop in the order in which they had arrived.

Citibus had complained at a Manchester public inquiry that GM Buses had been running unregistered minibuses in front of its services in the Oldham corridor since February (*Coach and Bus Week* March 28). GM Buses maintained that the minibuses were duplicates, operating within the premitted 'five minute envelope' on either side of the base registration timing. It was denied there had been any intent to target a specific operator. The intention had been to target what the company had identified as potentially profitable routes.

Mr Albu said there was no doubt that GM Buses had set upon a policy of aggresive competition. However, it was not his job to regulate competition as such.

It was legitimate, as the law presently stood, for a big operator to flood the market and drive out others who could not stand the heat.

● **Full report and details in next week's Licensing & Legal.**

■ COACH AND BUS

Freeman stays

AS *Coach and Bus Week* went to press (Tuesday, April 14), a civil service source tipped Roger Freeman to remain Minister for Public Transport under John McGregor, but assume new responsibilities for the privatisation of British Rail.

Two appointments at the Department of Transport will be Jeremy Hanley, MP for Richmond and Barnes, and Steven Norris, the Epping Forest MP with a special interest in the motor industry.

Mr Hanley is likely to assume responsibility for PSVs, and will determine how the remainder of the £10 million in bus priority pilot schemes will be spent.

● **Moves page 63.**

John McGregor

■ BUS

Disabled get a lift

TWO new Volvo D10M double deckers for Manchester-based GM Buses have been specially modified for the carriage of wheelchair-bound and disabled passengers.

They are part of a Northern Counties-bodied batch of 10 and feature a wheelchair lift set in the doorway and convertible seating on the lower deck.

Built to full Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive tendered vehicle specifications, the buses have a reduced seating capacity of 70 which includes two longitudonal side seats on the lower deck which can be tipped up to allow wheelchairs to be anchored.

Managing director, Dr Alan Westwell, said the two vehicles would be based in Wigan and used on conventional services.

"We will see whether there is casual demand for the lifts on ordinary services, while we design a specific number of accessible bus routes for the vehicles in consultation with the PTE," he said. CBW

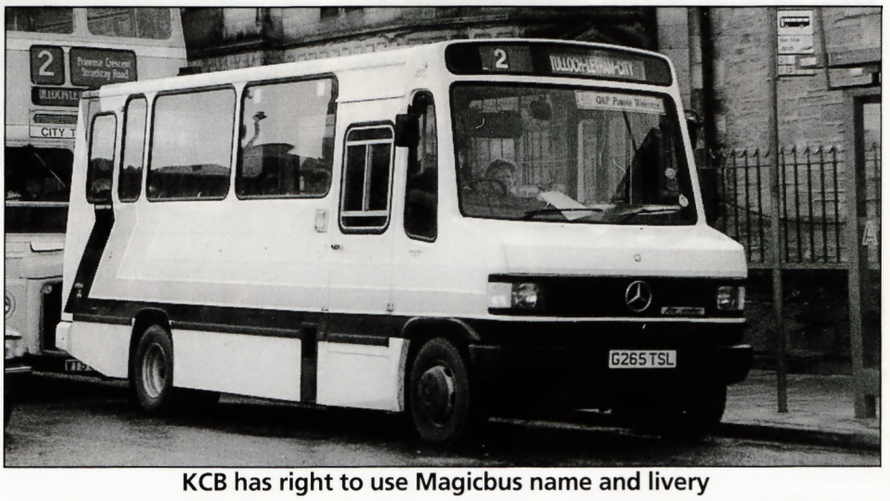
■ BUS

Kelvin's magic deal

STAGECOACH has sold its Glasgow-based Magicbus subsidiary to Kelvin Central Buses in a surprise move. As news of the sale broke, there was mounting speculation that by divesting itself of its only operations in the Glasgow area, Stagecoach was paving the way for a bid for 800 vehicle PTE-owned Strathclyde Buses.

The entire Magicbus business, including premises and vehicles, has gone to KCB, which has also won the right to the name and livery for a period. The 26 vehicles involved include seven Routemasters, three Volvo B58s a selection of Bristol VRs and Leyland Atlanteans for contract work, and six of the new Alexander-bodied Dennis Darts currently on delivery to Stagecoach fleets throughout the country.

The Magicbus operation was Brian Souter's first venture into deregulated bus service, after his express coaching successes in the mid 1980s. It started on D-day in October 1986, operating a mix of commercial services and contracts. The two main services today link central Glasgow with the giant postwar housing schemes at Castlemilk and Easterhouse.



KCB has right to use Magicbus name and livery

Neil Renilson, managing director of Stagecoach Scotland, said: "We have been aware that since the acquisition of Fife and Northern we have had a strong presence on the east coast of Scotland. Had SBG privatisation gone differently, we might have had other west coast companies, but Magicbus is relatively small, Glasgow based and divorced from the rest of our Scottish operations.

"We felt that the best long-term future of the business and the staff lay as part of a large west of Scotland company, like Kelvin Central. We are happy to see Magicbus join Kelvin Central, a progressive and developing company, firmly established in the Glasgow area."

The Stagecoach move, coming soon after the Conservative victory in the General Election, was seen as being prompted by a wish to clear the decks in Glasgow in preparation for the privatisation of Strathclyde Buses Ltd. Souter has already indicated his interest in SBL, where management has been assembling a buyout package. The Magicbus operation could have raised monopoly questions, but by selling out to Kelvin Central, the ground is now clear for Stagecoach to bid if, as many expect, SBL is put out to competitive tender.

Kelvin Central, created before the SBG sell-off from the former Central and Kelvin companies, has been busy buying back market share lost in the disastrous Central strikes in 1989, and has recently acquired vehicles and services from a number of smaller operators in the Lanarkshire area.

■ BUS

SMT sues after OAP fares agreement ends

SMT threatens legal action

IN the wake of a pensioner fares war in Lothian, SMT is suing the local council for allegedly back-tracking on subsidies.

The battle began when Lothian Region Council pulled the plug on free fares for OAPs and operators were forced to charge for the first time. Lothian Region Transport charged a flat rate of 30p but SMT, fearing a desertion by passengers, wanted to charge 10p.

According to SMT operations director Mike Mitchell, LRC promised subsidies would continue at equitable level - and confirmed the arrangement in writing. But now Mr Mitchel says they have renaged on the deal.

"We will be taking legal action against LRC," he told CBW. "We were worried that pensioners would desert the buses. The low fare did not result in any great improvement in numbers but we felt the move to 30p overnight would be suicidal."

The fares war eventually prompted Lothian Region Transport to bring fares down to a 5p flat rate, with SMT charging 10p and Edinburgh Transport, 20p. Mr Mitchell says LRT's rate was uneconomic: "It's quite possible that the Office of Fair Trading would be interested in these fares," he said.

All three operators have now set fares at 20p. CBW

"I THINK THAT SHOULD REDUCE THE VISUAL IMPACT ON THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT QUITE CONSIDERABLY, MR CLARKE"

Chester plans bus ban - see page 7

■ AFTER several delays, Her Majesty The Queen is to open Greater Manchester's Metrolink light rapid transit system on July 17. It will be the first system of its kind to run in this country.

■ NORTHAMPTON claims to have the most environmentally friendly bus shelters in the world, following the construction of two structures with frames made from 100 per cent recycled plastic. The new shelters were commissioned by Northampton Borough Council and designed and manufactured by Frontline Innovative Shelters of Bishops Auckland. Their recycled plastic frames are said to be strong and virtually maintenance free.

■ NORTHERN Counties is to supply products to Brian Souter's Stagecoach Holdings for the first time. The Wigan bodybuilder, which is in administrative receivership, is to equip 20 Leyland Olympian double deckers with single-door low-height bodies. The completed vehicles will be delivered to Stagecoach via Volvo Bus Ltd during September and October this year.

■ FOR security reasons, Parliament Square and many of the adjourning roads will be closed on the morning of May 6 for the state opening of Parliament. The Metropolitan Police expect the closures to remain in place from about 7am to 2pm

■ PREMIER Albanian Coaches has won a weekly service to Watford from Luton and District on tender from Croxley Green Parish Council. Premier Albanian's bid of £2,800 undercut L&D's by £21 per week.

■ HAMPSHIRE County Council's Sunday Rider scheme will be expanded again this summer when special buses will run on five extra routes. Notable new links are Sunday services direct from Winchester to Salisbury and Beaulieu.

■ THE UK's largest business park, Crossways in Dartford, has put on its own bus service between the park and Dartford rail station. The loop service will be run by a 33-seat Mercedes five days a week from 7am to 7pm.

■ COACH AND BUS

Ingfield sold to Fearnley

Independent identity retained

NORTH Yorkshire independent Ingfield of Settle is being taken over by the Blazefield Group, and will become the operating base for the recently acquired school contracts which commence at the end of the month (*Coach and Bus Week*, April 11)

Terms have been agreed for the purchase of the business, assets, goodwill and order book of Ingfield, with the completion now resting in the hands of solicitors.

Blazefield managing director, Giles Fearnley, said the subsidiary would trade as Ingfield Northern Rose and would reinforce its strong local identity.

"We have an opportunity to inject fresh capital into the business and I feel that the coaching business is ripe for development in the area," he said.

Ingfield will remain under the management of Alan Staveley, who will report direct to the Blazefield board.

A varied selection of coaches and one minibus have been acquired, and the fleet will be strengthened after the vehicles are appraised.

The new company will rent the property from the owners, who will continue to own the service station on the site. Engineering facilities will be enhanced and all existing drivers kept on.

Mr Fearnley said: "In view of the fact that we have won extra contracts, we are now recruiting additional drivers in the area."

■ COACH

Sanders now largest operator in Norfolk

SANDERS of Holt has expanded by acquisition to become the largest coach operator in Norfolk and one of the largest operators of Bedfords in the country.

After the take-over of 15 vehicles from Fakenham-based Bammants Coaches, the Sanders fleet has leapt to 63 with a mix of 50 Bedfords and one Dennis Javelin together with Mercedes-Benz and Leyland DAF minibuses. Sanders has merged its holiday tour business with Bammants to double its departures to over 60 this year.

General manager, Charles Sanders, said "From a marketing point of view it made sense to move into Fakenham because all our tours pass through the town."

Mr Sanders explained the company's growth from 5 vehicles in 1976: "Basically it's been a case of other operators wanting to get out rather than us wanting to expand."

■ COACH

Moved

NORTH Yorkshire independent Bibby's of Ingleton has moved its depot in the village to a new purpose built site worth around £250,000.

The company, which operates over 20 vehicles on local contracts and extend-ed tours has left its council owned site to move to the freehold property, which managing director Peter Bibby describes as a solid investment.

■ COACH

Leasks buys its fifth DAF

Plaxton DAF has ferry lift

ONE of the UK's most northerly coach operators, Leasks of Lerwick, is buying its fifth DAF coach. It incorporates a ferry lift which will prove useful on tours of the islands.

Partner Peter Leask said the coach would spend most of its life working island tours, some of them on contract to Shearings and other groups.

"The Shearings contract is regular but we do meet other tours which are organised by P & O ferries."

The Plaxton-bodied SB2305 DHS features the 8.25-litre engine with the ZF six-speed plus splitter gearbox. As well as the ferry lift, it also incorporates the optional kneeling facility shown in the picture.

The 18-vehicle company undertakes most of its work on the island, with tours and a contract service to the airport being the mainstay of summer business.

Two tours are scheduled to leave the island this year and the new DAF will soon be taking a private party to EuroDisney in France. CBW

■ BUS

Operators riled over street plan

CHESTER bus operators are outraged at the lack of consideration shown by both city and county councils in their latest proposals to close off critical city centre streets to through traffic.

Proposals have already been approved in principle to ban buses from Town Hall Square, Street Werburgh Street and Eastgate Street, which will effectively kill all cross-city links and prevent penetration of the commercial and shopping area.

Further consultations are planned prior to the advertisement of traffic orders, but operators claim that their views are not being taken on board, and the authorities are riding roughshod over passenger needs.

The new proposals follow the shelving of ambitious LRT plans last year which would have cost around £65 million. Those plans followed the *Traffic in Chester* study which recommended £90 million of expenditure with only £0.2 million directly on bus priorities.

Among the recommendations in the report was a recognition that a growing proportion of personal trips would have to be made by public transport. The report recommended private car restraint and advocated positive measures to increase the attractiveness of public transport, which had to be 'cheaper and quicker' than the private car.

Chester bus exchange could be only choice

Chester City Transport managing director, David Clark, said 80 per cent of passengers would be inconvenienced. Some would have an additional walking distance of more than a quarter of a mile to the shops.

Mr Clark said: "All the benefits could be achieved by banning cars. One road would have an 85 per cent traffic reduction, and another 70 per cent.".

"Passengers would have no practical alternative to the bus exchange and our buses would go round the city in ever decreasing circles."

Re-routeing would add an extra 15 per cent to costs for CCT, PMT/Crosville and Crosville Wales on most routes. Independents would also be affected.

"Sixty per cent of shoppers travel in by bus but I'm told that they are considering letting taxis use the streets outside the core hours of 1030 to 1630," Mr Clark said.

John Rimmington, of Crosville Wales, was more outspoken. "They talk of encouraging public transport, but they mean trams. They want buses hidden away underground or out of sight. I can't understand how at a time of recession they can consider increasing costs of operation and reducing our passengers."

Prudential advertisement

AN advertisement from brokers Chapman Stevens published in the April 4 issue of Coach and Bus Week wrongly stated that the Prudential Assurance Company had pulled out of the commercial insurance market, and fleet operators covered by the company would have to seek cover elsewhere when their current policies ended.

In fact, Prudential has only withdrawn from the broker market, and is still selling and servicing insurance through its large network of direct sales agents.

■ BUS

Crosville Wales closing two garages

LLANDUDNO-based Crosville Wales is closing down two of its garages in Gwynedd next month as part of a drive to reduce overhead costs but local commercial services will be expanded as part of the exercise.

Depots at Holyhead and Pwllheli will be sold but the open-plan depot at Blaenau Ffestiniog, closed in October 1990, will re-open.

Managing director, John Rimmington, said it was more economic to sell the sites and find secure parking facilities on industrial estates.

"Since transferring National Express work from Pwllheli, the garage became too large for our needs. We are re-opening Blaenau to accommodate the engineering facility," he said.

Holyhead garage, which is the last CW garage in Anglesey, has been sold.

The Pwllheli site may be redeveloped as a supermarket, leaving Gwynedd with just two key depots at Bangor and Llandudno and small sub-depots at Blaenau, Dolgellau and LLanrwst.

Mr Rimmington said: "By lowering our costs we are able to improve our commercial network, with commercialising the Pwllheli to Porthmadog route being an example." **CBW**

■ ARTICULATED bus initiatives in the UK will be given a boost when the maximum gross vehicle limit is lifted to 27 tones from January, 1993. Operators have until April 25 to make comments to the Department of Transport on the proposals which are at the draft stage for final comment.

■ WEAR Valley District Council is to poll pensioners, the handicapped and those medically barred from driving to see whether they want bus passes or concessionary fare tokens. All bus operators in County Durham will be affected by the outcome of the vote. Ballot papers must be returned by the beginning of June.

■ HULL-BASED East Yorkshire Motor Services has taken delivery of another two National Expressliners to help fulfil its contract to run nine coaches from Hull on the nationwide National Express network. EYMS has now spent £1.75million on new buses and coaches this year.

■ LONDON Buses subsidiary, East London, is to re-route its midibus service 278 (Limehouses to East Beckton district centre) to serve the new development at Windsor Park Estate from May. The service will continue to operate its 20-minute daytime frequency.

■ REPAIR work to Battersea Bridge will close it to bus services for several months from April 21. Routes affected are 19, 45A, 49, 219, 349 and N19, most of which will be diverted over Chelsea Bridge.

■ BAKERS of Biddulph is running its special tourist bus service in North Staffordshire for a second year with executive style mini-coaches.

The seasonal service linking the Potteries to Biddulph Grange Gardens first took to the roads last May. An added incentive to passengers is a saving on admission prices to both Chatterley Whitfield Mining Museum and Biddulph Grange .

Bakers has co-ordinated timetables with its China Service so that visitors can use a rover ticket to transfer at Hanley bus station.

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■ COACH

Improved new Plaxton Excalibur joins Leon's

NEARLY six months after the launch, the first of Plaxton's exciting range of new generation coaches are joining the fleets of independent operators.

Headline grabbing orders from Shearings, Wallace Arnold, Excelsior and Parks have been filtering out of the Scarborough plant since production got under way. But smaller image conscious buyers have been tempted through the doors of the Eastfield showrooms. Harry Shaw has a Premiere and Leon's of Stafford tied the knot on a deal for the first Excalibur.

New seats and more soft trim

These later two vehicles, both on Volvo chassis, have sparked new interest in the Paramount replacement body. Not only has the supply of unsold Paramounts all but dried-up, but potential buyers are keen to examine at close quarters Plaxton's modifications to its pre-production show vehicles.

Leon Douglas, managing director of Leon's Coaches, was among Plaxton's critics when he visited the Coach and Bus Show at the NEC last October. He told *Coach and Bus Week* that he went to Plaxton's Scarborough factory with the intention of buying a Paramount. However, he soon became enthusiastic about the new design when he was told about production line modifications.

After receiving new lower body panels to overcome the ripple-effect seen under the NEC spotlights, new seats and other detail changes the metallic maroon and grey Excalibur met with Mr Leon's approval. He said: "The sides have virtually been repanelled and the new seats are much better than those with the plastic backs."

Gone is the plastic feel to the interior. The headlining is now soft trim and the florescent light strip has been moved from the leading edge to a concealed position under the luggage rack. Mr Douglas is pleased with the design of the sunken centre toilet which leaves the rear boot space unobstructed. The boxed-in

Leon's is first small operator with Excalibur

WC and electric hand-drier are praised - both practical features from the operators viewpoint.

In addition to taking the lead on roll-over, seat belt and seat strength to meet international ECE regs R66, R14 and R80, Plaxton is among the first to gain dispensation to take advantage of proposed reg R36 which permits the continental exit to be designated an emergency door. Consequently this option improves off-side seat pitch, heating and draught exclusion.

Plaxton says that the wind-cheating design improves fuel efficiency by up to 10 percent. *Coach and Bus Week* is to monitor this claim by recording the performance of Leon's Excalibur over the next six months as part of the next series of Maintenance Diary reports.

■ COACH

Target Europe

CONTINENTAL and executive travel is the target market for the latest self-drive mini-coaches in the 135-strong fleet of West Midlands Hire & Haulage of Smethwick and Dudley.

Owner, John Langford, operates four 12-seaters and is adding two 17-seater Leyland DAF's. He said: "We had many enquiries for larger vehicles, and the market also pointed towards continental travel, where we do not send the smaller vehicles as a matter of policy. We also want to aim at the market for hotel and executive travel"

The two new coaches are distinguished from the rest of the yellow-liveried fleet, by a white factory finished with black and red lettering. "The 400 allows plenty of leg room for more comfortable long distance travel, and the air suspension system was the only one on the market at sensible prices," Mr Langford said. The tachograph-equipped vehicles cost £100 a day for a continental hire.

Factory-fitted with optional air suspension and power steering, the coaches were supplied by Lex

Mini coaches for the continental self drive market

Tillotson of Halesowen and fitted with high-backed coach seating by Crystals of Doncaster.

Leyland DAF says it is now the only manufacturer in the up to 3.5 tonne sector to offer a people carrier, ex-factory, with twin rear wheels.

● Small passenger carr-ying vehicles (9-16 passenger seats) not used for hire or reward can be driven on category D1 licence. Holders of either an old style licence showing entitlement to drive vehicles in groups A or B or a new style licence showing categories B and D1 are equally valid. The minimum age of 21 applies. Vehicles used for hire or reward can only be driven by PCV category D licence and must be operated under PSV regulations.

■ BUS

Spanish expansion

FOLLOWING a successful launch of its open top tours in Seville, Guide Friday is adding to its operation in southern Spain. The company is sending out two more open top deckers from its base in Stratford upon Avon.

The green and cream buses will travel by ferry across the Bay of Biscay and then drive down to Seville - a total of 1,600 miles. Running under the Severima trade name, the open top tour service has been launched to coincide with the opening of Expo '92, the showcase of the world's latest technological innovations expected to attract 18 million visitors this year. CBW

Yorkshire Traction chairman, Frank Carter, signs the first order for Wright's new City Bus, watched by Traction's Norman Cook (left) and Wright's area sales manager, Charles Moseby

■ BUS

Traction first to order City Bus

YORKSHIRE Traction is the first operator to order Wright's new full-size City Bus body. The company has ordered five, to be built on Scania's K93CR60 chassis.

Traction's chairman and managing director, Frank Carter, placed the order after visiting the Wright factory in Ballymena. He said: "I was very impressed by the quality of workmanship and by the company's enthusiasm in tackling the project, particularly the attention which their design engineers have paid to getting the body-chassis relationship right."

The new Wright body was announced at the end of last year, and uses the proven Alusuisse construction system. Wright's commercial director, Jeff Wright, said: "This body completes our single deck product range which now encompasses minibuses, midibuses and this full-size city bus, all built using the Alusuisse structural system."

■ BUS

Preston gets last new-look Leylands

EIGHT new Leyland Olympians delivered to Preston Transport could be the last with the redesigned Leyland bodywork launched at the Coach and Bus show last year. Bodybuilding has ended at the Leyland plant in Workington, and chassis production transferred to the Volvo Truck plant in Irvine.

The new 78 seaters, built to full DiPTAC specifications, bring Preston's total of Olympians to 19, with the current purchase replacing 13 and 14 year old Atlanteans, which are being retained for additional operations during the Guild celebrations this summer.

■ COACH AND BUS

Sales fall by 10 per cent

COACH and bus sales fell back by 10 per cent last month from 256 to 231, according to the latest statistics from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, .

The slide in March means that registrations in the first quarter of 1992, at 560, are now nearly 18 per cent down on the first three months of last year, itself the worst sales year on record.

Full size bus sales have been particularly hard hit. Less than half the number of full size buses sold in March 1991 were sold last month, 21 compared with 48. And so far this year, sales are down over 61 per cent.

Ironically, Leyland was the best selling manufacturer in the full-size bus sector - with just nine registrations. DAF took second place with seven SB220 sales and is now the only manufacturer to have sold more full size buses so far this year than in the same period in 1991.

March coach sales were less depressed than their full size bus equivalents, but were down over 21 per cent nonetheless.

Volvo still dominates the market with a massive 57 per cent share. Although Swedish competitor Scania had a barren month for bus sales, it continues to strengthen its position in the coach sector. Last month it sold 21 coaches, up from just 12, to more than double its total.

Dennis continues to make hay with its Dart chassis before Volvo B6R deliveries begin later this year. All but seven of the Guildford maker's total of 53 registrations last month were Darts - another impressive performance and enough to give it undisputed second place behind Volvo in the overall coach and bus sales league.

COACH AND BUS REGISTRATIONS MARCH 1992

	Mar 1991	Mar 1992	% share	YTD 1991	YTD 1992	% share
Manufacturers						
Volvo	164	99	43	380	204	36
Dennis	23	53	23	119	166	30
DAF Bus	14	23	10	30	58	10
Scania	39	21	9	64	58	10
Optare	1	18	8	30	40	7
MAN/VW	0	2	-	0	3	-
Total British	58	88	38	296	266	47
Total imports	198	143	62	386	294	52
Total	256	231	100	682	560	100

FULL-SIZE BUS REGISTRATIONS MARCH 1992

	Mar 1991	Mar 1992	% share	YTD 1991	YTD 1992	% share
Leyland	2	9	43	70	25	32.5
DAF	6	7	33	18	29	38
Volvo	13	4	19	40	8	10
Dennis	0	1	5	28	1	1
Scania	27	0	-	43	14	18
Total	48	21	100	199	77	100

FULL-SIZE COACH REGISTRATIONS MARCH 1992

	Mar 1991	Mar 1992	% share	YTD 1991	YTD 1992	% share
Volvo	117	78	57	198	137	53
Scania	12	21	15	21	44	17
DAF	8	16	12	12	28	11
Dennis	0	6	4	7	10	4
Leyland	29	4	3	65	16	6
Setra	3	2	1.5	5	6	2
Bova	3	1	1	3	3	1
Duple	0	0	-	2	1	-
MAN	0	0	-	0	1	-
Others	3	9	7	27	13	5
Total	175	137	100	340	259	100

■ COACH

Drogmoller is building Merc

MERCEDES-BENZ has farmed-out the construction of its latest addition to the award-winning 0404 coach range. Drogmoller of Heilbronn is building the 0404 double-decker which can seat up to 79 passengers.

The first is nearing completion and is expected to be one of the star exhibits at the Hanover IAA Show which opens on May 9.

Annual orders between 70 and 120 vehicles are anticipated. CBW

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The Portsdown Urban Bus, a low-floor Midibus for the Dennis Dart and Volvo B6R chassis from Wadham Stringer, with capacities from 33-43 seats plus up to 17 standees.

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■ COACH AND BUS

PSV market showing first glimmer of hope

WITH used coach and bus dealer's yards up and down the country gradually emptying of stock, the used PSV market is starting to show the first glimmer of hope.

A buyer's market at the turn of the year is threatening to turn in the sellers favour in the wake of the General Election. Dealer's reporting depleted stocks include Kassbohrer UK, Van Hool UK, Scania Coach Sales, and Alan Wilson PSV.

Further evidence came at last week's ADT coach and bus auction in Manchester.

Although the pre-sale catalogue only contained 56 vehicles, a flush of late entries boosted numbers up to 85 - half were sold. ADT commercial operations manager, Paul Clay, told *Coach and Bus Week* that a clearance rate of 50 percent justified the 1992 two-monthly programme of dedicated coach and bus auctions.

Mr Clay claimed vehicle presentation influenced prices.

"Seven Optare CityPacers from London Buses reached prices ranging from £4,200 to £5,000 because they were cleaned prior to the sale."

With a large minibus entry Mr Clay observed: "There was a lot of interest in mini-sized vehicles.

"As with all sales publicity given to the event encourages entries from owners of similar vehicles to grow."

The picture for full-size vehicles reflected the changing market. All but four of the full-sized coaches and buses were over ten years old. There were only eight buses and the majority of the coaches were Bedford and Leyland-chassied Duples.

ADT sale judged "a success"

■ COACH

Second StarRider

POTTERIES-based Bakers Coaches of Biddulph has introduced a second Optare StarRider into its tour fleet, as demand for the first 29 seater on both small tours and private hires grew.

Bakers operates an extensive all-year-round programme of British and Continental tours and the two small 'Midicruisers' will cater for small groups as well as providing feeder services into main tour departures.

With a catchment area that extends from Leeds and Blackpool to Birmingham, the company often hires in other company vehicles to supplement its fleet of 35.

The company also operates the Lewis's Tour programme, having bought the business six years ago, and can have up to 50 vehicles away in one week.

Peter Baker said the Mercedes 811D would be one of seven in the fleet by next month, although most of the minis had less than 20 seats.

"While the majority of the big coaches are Plaxton-bodied Volvos, the two StarRiders will maintain the quality, reliability and cleanliness that every coach operator should aim for," Mr Baker said.

■ COACH AND BUS

Drastic fall in leasing

THERE has been a drastic fall of 32 per cent in leasing for commercial vehicles last year to £0.7billion, according to the Finance and Leasing Association. It is not possible to split down the figures to show the exact number of coaches and buses leased.

But the Association does separate figures for what it calls the transport and communication industry, which would include coaches.

In 1990 some £148 million was supplied by Association members for leasing to companies within the transport and communication sectors. That is less than half the £323 million supplied in 1990 and the £301 million supplied in 1989.

1991 was the worst year on record for sales of coaches and buses.

■ BUS

First Marshalls running

THE first Marshalls minibuses have gone into service with employee-owned People's Provincial of Fareham. Provincial has taken seven Iveco-based vehicles which were finished by Marshalls following the collapse of their original builders, Carlyle Bus Centre, last year.

Provincial's acquisition of the vehicles follows the surrender of local authority contracts in Portsmouth by Harry Blundred's minibus operation in the city. Managing director Piers Marlow said: "The tendered services will take us into areas of the city which we have not served before."

The new Marshall Ivecos will run on the tendered routes and commercial services, and Provincial is also taking some of its reserve fleet of Leyland Nationals out of mothballs to cope with the increased workload. CBW

The first Marshall mini

■ BUS

Scanias a gas in Aussie

IN an order worth around £32 million, Scania is to supply State Transit, the Sydney-based Australian bus company, with 250 gas-powered and 50 conventional buses. The order is believed to be the biggest for Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) vehicles so far placed. Delivery will begin in 1993, with the chassis being supplied in CKD kits and bodies fitted by Ansair.

The gas-powered vehicles will be 12.2 metres long. The diesel-powered buses will be stretched to 14.5 metres to supplement the city's fleet of articulated buses. Both types will be fitted with larger windows and kneeling suspension.

The use of CNG is part of the Government's campaign to ease pollution in Sydney. "The safe, clean compressed natural gas engines produce 26 per cent less carbon dioxide emissions than conventional diesel engines," said transport minister, Bruce Baird.

■ BUS

Deckers move in

YORKSHIRE Rider's York City subsidiary has moved further towards minibus replacement with the conversion last week of three more city routes to full-size bus operation.

Rider York's minibus fleet has now been reduced to 14 from a high of 85 inherited in the takeover from the AJS Group in 1990.

Managing director, David Marsh, said the company had been considering more conversions for some time but a request from Clydeside 2000 to purchase 10 minibuses had brought matters forward.

"We have scrounged full-size buses from the main Rider fleet and are reviewing the impact on ridership levels by increasing capacity."

■ LIGHT RAPID TRANSIT

Leeds may get a second tramway

WITH Parliamentary authority for its first rapid transit tramway in Leeds secure, West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority is planning a feasibility study into a second tramway corridor in the city.

The first eight-mile line from the city centre to Tingley in south Leeds was approved last year and is expected to cost £96 million.

The second phase of an overall £620 million city-wide transportation scheme envisages a line along the A660 corridor in North West Leeds which has notorious pinch points at Hyde Park and Headingley.

Leeds City Council, which is a partner in the overall transportation strategy, has selected the corridor to spread rapid transit options around the city, because corridors in north and east Leeds have already been identified for the Government-backed guided bus demonstration project.

Mindful of environmental considerations for the area, Councillor Mick Lyons, passenger transport executive chairman, said that, although consultants had been appointed, officers were just formulating ideas.

"This study is to determine the facts so that consultations can take place," he said.

It is expected that the initial study will be completed in May and, if a viable option emerges, a full exercise will mounted during the summer.

■ BUS

Anti-jam measures a priority

WAKEFIELD City Council is considering bus priority measures as a first step to tackling traffic congestion, but the longer-term step of a Supertram link to Leeds will also be investigated.

Bus only lanes on Doncaster Road, Dewsbury Road and Horbury Road are among short- term measures that are currently being looked at and could be included in TPP submissions next year.

Other measures, which include park and ride schemes and bus/rail interchanges are also on the agenda.

A working party of officers of the council and West Yorkshire PTE has already been set up to investigate the potential for extending the Leeds Supertram line into Wakefield, as a longer-term measure.

In his report, chief transportation and engineering officer Mike Silk considered that attention should be given to more radical measures to assist buses.

"If bus travel is to be made more attractive, it must be seen to have positive benefits over the private car," he said.

■ LIGHT RAPID TRANSIT

MVA to do GLT feasibility study

THE MVA consultancy has been appointed to test the feasibility of guided light transit in Bristol.

Jointly commissioned by Avon County Council and Badgerline, the study follows the successful testing of comprehensive LRT and bus-based strategies as part of the Bristol integrated transport and environment study (Brites).

Initially, testing will be carried out on a proposed route from Hartcliffe to Cribbs Causeway through the city centre. Further routes will be tested to simulate a comprehensive GLT strategy. The work, due to be completed by May, will include travel demand forecasts plus economic and financial appraisals, and evaluations against objectives set during Brites.

Guided light transit on trial in Bristol

■ BUS

City planning women-only service

LEEDS City Council hopes to have four vehicles running on a women-only night bus service by August. The service, which has been funded by the government's urban crime fund and West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive to the tune of £86,500, will use four wheelchair accessible buses supplied by Leeds Social Services to a voluntary organisation called Night Link. Passengers will be offered a door-to-door prebook service for around £1 per trip. LCC hopes to secure future funding for the service from local business and organisations. CBW

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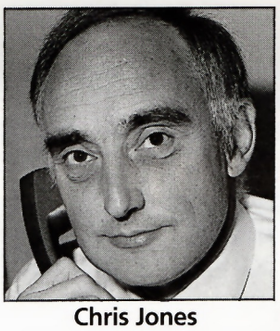
■ BUS

Jones is back

FORMER Carlyle Bus Centre director Chris Jones is back in business as mainland Britain's agent for Ulster bodybuilder Robert Wright.

Jones has set up a new company, the Birmingham Bus Centre Ltd, which trades from the Pattersons Coaches premises at Elliot Road, Selly Oak, and is expecting the first new Mercedes 709/811 25 - 45 seaters from Northern Ireland to join his stock of used vehicles early in May.



Chris Jones

Wrights new Mercs on way

Although Wrights itself is known to be working on a full-size single deck design, Jones is concentrating on the midi market. "But we expect to sell Dennis Dart and Volvo B6R chassied midis eventually," he said.

By having a mainland Britain outlet, Wrights will be able to offer dealer facilities such as part exchange to operators. Parts distribution will remain based at the Northern Ireland factory for the moment, although Jones expects to carry some items in the future. The big fleet market will continue to be served direct from the factory.

■ BUS

Guy launches mini

A NEW van conversion specialist on the doorstep of the former Reeve Burgess factory has signalled its arrival in the PSV minibus market.

Frank Guy Ltd of Clay Cross has a contract to build 12 shuttle buses for Hotel Link of Heathrow and a high-spec 15-seat Mercedes-Benz demonstrator. The Hotel Link vehicles are Iveco 49.12s converted to 16-seaters with large luggage provision.

Phillip Trennan, Frank Guy's bus, coach and welfare manager claims the company has picked up trade on the back of the Plaxton Groups closure of its Reeve Burgess plant in Chesterfield. He told *Coach and Bus Week*: "We're going full out for the business and the enquiries that we're having is unbelievable."

Mr Trennan joined Frank Guy three years ago after an apprenticeship with Reeve Burgess. Prior to branching into PSV work, the company built crew cabs, box vans and specialised in aircraft interiors.

■ BUS

Big boost for CMB profits

THANKS to a property sale, Hong Kong operator China Motor Bus recorded an extraordinary increase in profits despite declining passenger numbers in its last financial half year.

By selling a 60 per cent share of its North Point depot site to Swire Properties, CMB was able to add a massive HK$575 million (about £43.23 million) to its earnings, raising the total profit in the six months to December 31 to HK$ 613.38 million (£46.12 million), compared to HK$27.56 million (£2.07 million) a year earlier. Even before extraordinary items, the bus company's profit was HK$38.33 million - a 71 per cent rise on the previous year's HK$22.46 million.

Earnings per share were 83 cents, compared to 49 cents previously. Turnover was up 19 per cent , and the company has recommended a special dividend of HK$3 per share, on top of an interim dividend of 21 cents per share.

China Motor Bus chairman, Ngan Shing-kwan said patronage continued to decline with the number of passengers carried during the six months falling by seven per cent from 140.61 million to 130.83 million.

Competition between the various modes of public transport on Hong Kong Island and the growth in private car numbers had both contributed to the decline.

The company was addressing the problem by intensifying its programme of service improvements and planning consultation with passengers to determine changes in their transport needs. The joint development of the North Point site with Swire properties would swell future profits. CBW

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■ BUS

Research project

CAMBUS has teamed up with Cambridge City Council to carry out a comprehensive market research campaign.

The campaign has three main objectives:

- To gain views on the planned pedestrianisation of the city centre.
- To obtain in-depth views on issues relating to Cambus bus services.
- To assess patterns of non-bus and bus users.

Cambus managing director, John Steel, said: " The company will have valuable information to help us plan services and the city council will have vital planning information."

■ COACH AND BUS

Shearings seeks buyer for depot

SHEARINGS' Tunbridge Wells depot is up for sale as the Wigan-based tour operator consolidates operations after the fleet reductions made over the winter period.

Managing director, John Slatcher, said the depot would not be closed until a purchaser was found. "We have streamlined our operations and the site is only required as a satellite for engineering and overnight cleaning of our continental tour fleet."

Shearings wound down its operations last December, prior to selling its local bus services and contracts to Maidstone and District, and interchanges its tour vehicles at Dover.

The depot and services were originally acquired in April 1990 with the purchase of Eagle Coaches. Competitive local bus routes were then operated in the town as well as a new allocation of tour vehicles.

Shearings selling Tunbridge Wells depot

■ COACH AND BUS

Rebody move is a success

A MOVE into the rebodying and refurbishment market has proved a successful gamble for Drawlane's coachbuilding subsidiary, East Lancs.

Last year, the company exhibited at a national show for the first time since 1948 when it took a stand at Coach and Bus 91 at Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre, with the emphasis on refurbishment and replacement rather than the depressed new vehicle market.

East Lancs sales manager, Eddie Brown, said: "This paid dividends for us in terms of generating interest in refurbishment and we now have a full order book for well into the year."

In addition to the coach to bus rebodying and conversion work carried out for Grey-Green, East Lancs has orders for about 30 National Greenways - a re-engined, refurbished and restyled version of the old Leyland National.

Featuring a 'green' Gardner engine in place of the original unit, and extensive body and running gear renovation, a batch of 14 Greenways have been ordered by Proudmutual subsidiary Kentish Bus.

A further six are going to East Yorkshire Motor Services, and London Buses and South Yorkshire Transport subsidiary SUT are each taking two for evaluation.

■ BUS

Brighton & Hove in off-bus ticket drive

BRIGHTON & Hove Bus and Coach company has launched a new drive to promote its off-bus ticketing scheme, introduced last summer.

The area covered by the standard Saver 'scratch 'n go' tickets has been increased and the price of a three month Saver pack reduced from £100 to £85.

Standard Savers now give unlimited travel from Stenyning in the west to Newhaven and Denton in the east - areas previously reached using the more expensive Gold Savers, which are being phased out.

And short trip travellers in Rottingdean, Saltdean, Peacehaven, Newhaven and Denton now have their own low-cost Local Saver ticket.

The network of corner shops and newsagents where Savers can be bought is being extended to cope with increasing demand. More than 40 retail outlets have joined the network in recent months, and Savers are on sale in over 100 Post Offices throughout the bus company's operating area.

Before and after: coach (left) has been transformed into bus (right)

■ COACH AND BUS

New buses from old coaches

HAVING already rebodied nine single-deck coaches as double-deck buses, Grey-Green is now transforming seven more Volvo B10M coaches into single-deck city buses.

The single-deck bus body chosen is an 11.3-metre 49-seat East Lancs variant of its EL 2000 body.

"This design is more or less the same as the 13 complete new EL2000-bodied B10Ms we bought in October 1990," Grey-Green general manager, John Card, told Coach and Bus Week. "But these are slightly longer and have room for more passengers.

"They will be used mainly on LT-tendered route 167 Debden - Ilford and based at our newly-constructed Barking depot." CBW

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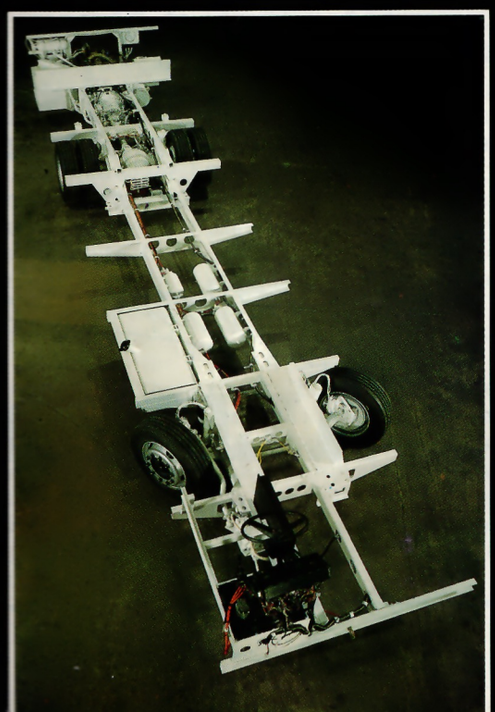
Lance *- points ahead*



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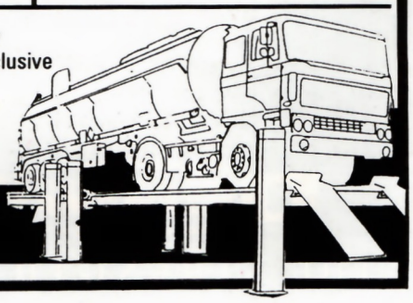

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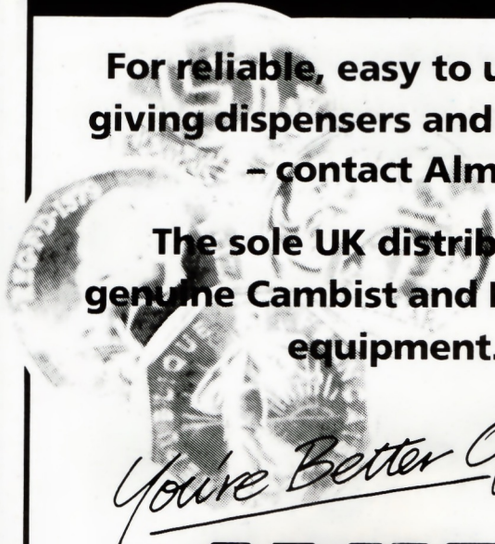

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Bonding proposals still need watching

THE consultative proposals to meet the bonding requirement of Article 7 of the EC Directive do not call for the acerbic comments which the Draft Regulation to implement Articles 1 to 6 merited. But there are points worth considering.

The Department of Trade & Industry is now proposing that: there should be no licensing body for tour packagers; packagers should have the option of giving security for clients' cash by a bond, or through insurance, or holding it in a 'designated' account; the risk of any need for repatriation following insolvency is to be covered by insurance; and that how packagers have met these responsibilities should be set out in 'any brochure or other publicity material.'

One notable omission is any indication of how the end customer's money will be protected when it has been paid to a private party group organiser.

In the, not impossible, event of this person losing or misappropriating the funds, or becoming bankrupt, the customer would appear to have no protection.

For the packager, who is the party required by the directive to be bonded, must surely only be under a duty to give security for money which he has actually received.

The voluntary attempts by the industry some years ago to offer an insurance scheme against the risk of a holiday packager's insolvency failed because, without the scrutiny of accounts required for bonding, or the individual assessment of risk which an individual policy would have involved, the blanket premium reflected the fact that such 'block' insurance averaged out the risk between the honest and the dishonest, the prudent and the feckless, the sound and the potentially insolvent.

Either this security will need to be obtained by individually procured insurance policies; or any master policy negotiated by, say, a trade association, would need individual premiums calculated according to the actual degree of risk involved.

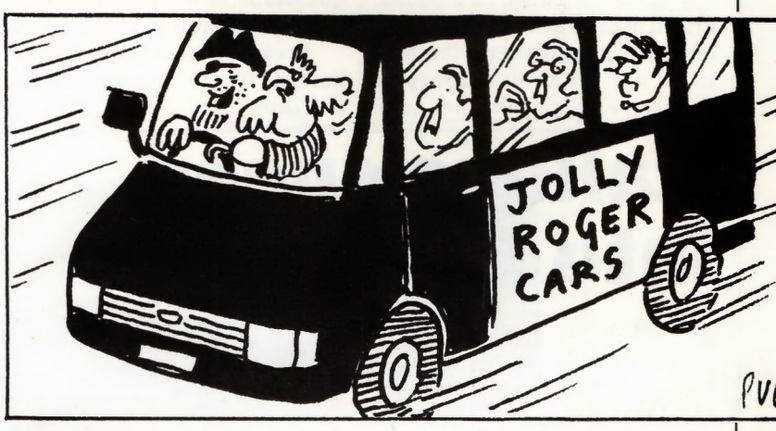
Simply holding customers' cash in a 'designated account' is a concept which many operators will see as a cost effective, and apparently administratively simple, way of guaranteeing the safety of clients' money until the package is executed.

It has much to commend it and should be adopted in principle. There are, however, some problems which have to be satisfied for it to function:

- It would need to be held by a third party (for example, a bank or a trade association) as trustees for the customers to protect its contents from general creditors in the event of insolvency.
- Thought needs to be given whether it could be a single 'suspense account' for each organiser, or whether each departure, or even each customer's money, would need to be identified.
- There would need to be some safeguard and/or sanction to ensure that the package organiser paid all monies received into the designated account.
- Similar safeguards would be required to allow the release back to the package organiser of the funds in respect of completed packages at the appropriate time (and perhaps a definition of when that was).

The proposed requirement for organisers to show how clients are protected 'in any brochure or other publicity material' requires modification, partly because of the imprecision of the phrase; but also because organisers may wish to 'bond' different packages in different ways, making a statement in a brochure unsuitable.

As the consumer is entitled to assume that the requirement is met at the time of purchase decision, it is surely sufficient for the written contract, which all customers will have to be given, to also contain the statement of how, on the particular package purchased, this requirement is fulfilled.



Stamp out the mini menace

I HAVE before me a letter from four operators to the south of London who echo the concern of many readers about the growing menace of illegally operated minibuses.

They urge that readers should write to me with examples to demonstrate how big a problem this is.

I am in total agreement that the enforcement agencies are probably not aware of the growth and magnitude of the use of unlicensed minibuses carrying passengers for hire and reward. But I am equally aware that they give it a low priority, partly because of the difficulty of actually proving to a court that the hire and reward element existed.

This prompts me to pass on a thought which I know is being canvassed: that the law should be amended to require any vehicle with more than eight passenger seats to fully comply with PSV law.

This would do away with the need to prove hire and reward - for if it was carrying passengers it would need an operator licence disc and a PSV licensed driver.

The ease of enforcement thus created would make its implementation more likely and more efficacious. It would remove at a stroke the confusion and complication of which legislation is applicable having regard to the size of the vehicle and the use to which it is being put.

While I will be happy to receive shoals of letters illustrating the size of the problem, I favour seeking a solution. I, therefore, commend this simple change in the law to operator readers and to those who legislate or enforce the law.

Not only is the illegal operation of minibuses an undoubted sore in the side of many legitimate operators, who are rightly annoyed that they have to submit to controls which are evaded by the, virtually unchecked and increasing, illegal plunderers of their market; there should also be concern for the safety and welfare of the innocent passengers who are lured to ride in the cowboys' minibuses.

Passengers, on say any 12-seater minibus, must surely have equal needs of, and the right to expect, safety and legality of operation (including insurance cover), irrespective of the status of the owner - and whether or not there is a hire and reward element.

I-Spy grown up bus spotters

HERE'S one to keep the kids on school trips quiet. Michelin and I-Spy have added six titles to the famous I-Spy series of children's books. Priced at £1.25 and available from bookshops everywhere, the new titles are *On a Car Journey in France, Fishing, In the Lake District, Motorbikes and In the Town.*

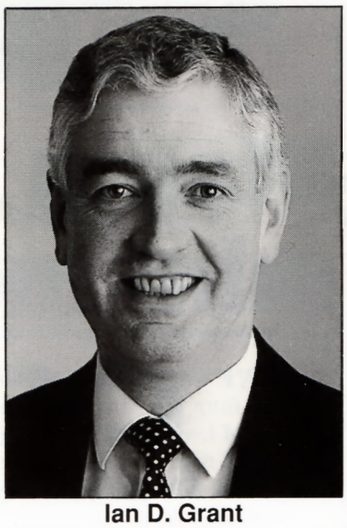
Each book is packed with masses of things to spot and questions to answer for which points are scored and badges won.

In case you feel like joining in, the sixth title in the series is *Buses and Taxis.*

Italians speed into Scotland

SCOTTISH Tourist Board chairman Ian Grant brought cheer to some grey weather in Glasgow during last week's Scotland Travel Fair.

He had called a press conference to explain to the assembled hacks - from as far afield as Turkey and Russia - how the inbound trade for the province stacked up against that from the UK. Buyers at STF, he explained, amounted to some 118 from North America, 72 from Germany, 44 Dutchmen, 14 from Hong Kong, a dozen Aussies, 41 Belgians and 20 Italians.



Ian D. Grant

"How many visitors from Italy do you get every year?" asked one earnest journo.

Mr Grant looked to his advisors for the figures but none were forthcoming. Without batting an eyelid, he turned back to the audience and said: "I'm not sure of the figures for Italian visitors, but one way to monitor them is to look at the annual number of speeding offences..."

Olympian barrier to lesser mortals

CASUAL observations at Preston's massive 80-bay bus station during the evening peak last week did not support last week's claim by taxi-bus mastermind, Robert Clarke, that passengers were actually fighting to get on to his minibuses.

Indeed, the opposite was true. Most of the eight seaters were lucky to achieve a 25 per cent load factor when they pulled away, although there may well have been more passengers en route.

It was interesting, however, to find that the company had been allocated stands one to three at the extreme end of the complex and the unallocated stand four was occupied by a dormant (or perhaps immobilised) J-reg Leyland Olympian of Preston Bus, which effectively blocked passengers' view of the Lancashire Rose taxi-buses!

Effective use of resources is the key phrase to success in today's challenging business but surely a brand new double decker should be earning its corn rather than masquerading as either a barricade or a smoke screen at tea time?

WHAT IN

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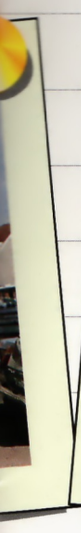

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How to hit back at speed claims

Help on music in coaches, please

From Peter White

I have received an inquiry from Bernie Carolan of the Public Transport Corporation of the State of Victoria regarding the use of piped music, other taped programming or live radio on public transport vehicles.

While some examples of taped music in rail stations are familiar, together with use of video TV, on coaches there is little documentation of sound system use on vehicles. I would be interested in any examples of current practice that your readers can provide.

Alternatively, they may write direct to Bernie Carolan at the Public Transport Corporation, 60 Market Street, Melbourne, Victoria 3000, Australia.

Professor Peter White
Polytechnic of Central London
35 Marylebone Street
London NW1 5LS

From Roy Anderson

I refer to the news item on page 13 of *Coach and Bus Week* March 28: we have had quite enough of the unsubstantiated remarks alleging speeding by coach drivers made by this man Steve Wright.

However, we do not consider it worth while endeavouring to explain the regulations to him. Such people glory so much in their own imagined importance that they do not wish to be informed.

So how do we deal with it? Our opinion is that we should write to the organisation which deals with complaints about broadcasting, but I regret I do not have the details of the person, address or name of the organisation to whom I should write.

If you have this information may I ask you to send it to me, and perhaps at the same time you might consider whether there is any point in suggesting this idea to other operators who might take a similar view.

Obviously, if there is a specific incident where it can be proved the driver managed to overcome the speed limiter and exceed the speed limit, then we will take action. But we need the date, the time and vehicle registration number.

I would also draw your attention to the Bus & Coach Council briefing sheet, which demonstrates how far out are the speedometers on most cars which are being used as means of determining the alleged speed of a coach.

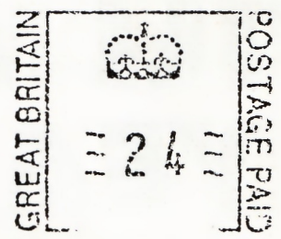
Roy Anderson
Assistant general manager
Trathens Travel Services
Plymouth
Devon

● If you or your company is directly involved in the allegation or if it is of direct interest to either you or your company, then contact Mr R D Hewlett at the Broadcasting Complaints Commission, Grosvenor Gardens House, 35 & 37 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W OBS. Tel: 071 630 1966.

If you have a general or specific complaint about a programme broadcast on ITV, then write to Mrs Gladstone, Independent Television Commission, 70 Brompton Road, London SW3 1EY. Tel: 071 584 7011.

If you have a general or specific complaint about a programme broadcast on BBC television or radio, then write to The Viewer and Listener Correspondence Department, Broadcasting House, London W1A 1AA. Tel: 071 580 4468.

Coach and Bus Week is always interested in hearing from operators on any topic of interest, including allegations of coach speeding. Write to the editor at the address given on this page - Ed.



Write to: The Editor, *Coach and Bus Week*, EMAP Response Publishing Ltd, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough, PE11DS, or by fax: 0733 62656

The editor is always pleased to receive letters for publication in *Coach And Bus Week* and will, if requested, publish these anonymously. But please attach your name and address for our own information.

Too big, but...

From Dave Gladwin

Although I think *Coach and Bus Week* more clumsy in size for reading on a vehicle, I find the mix interesting and it's a change to look over the fence at the busmen's activities. But then, what else is a shuttle than an up-market bus ride, particularly when they get 57 seats in where 41 is quite nice for us, thank you! We shall be interested to see how the magazine evolves.

Dave Gladwin
Transport research, documentation and development
Alvechurch
Birmingham

Citybus is free marketeer in HK

From Lyndon Rees

We have been following with much interest your reports and correspondence surrounding recent developments in Hong Kong's public transport sector.

The transport situation here is most complex and one that is highly motivated politically especially as we approach the 1997 handover of sovereignty. Therefore, I do not wish to comment in depth at this stage on the difficult situation in Hong Kong since this would occupy your entire publication. I would, however, just like to follow up on Mike Davis' letter which seemed to imply that Government has tried to strangle, in so far as our industry is concerned, the business free market traditions that have existed generally in Hong Kong since colonisation.

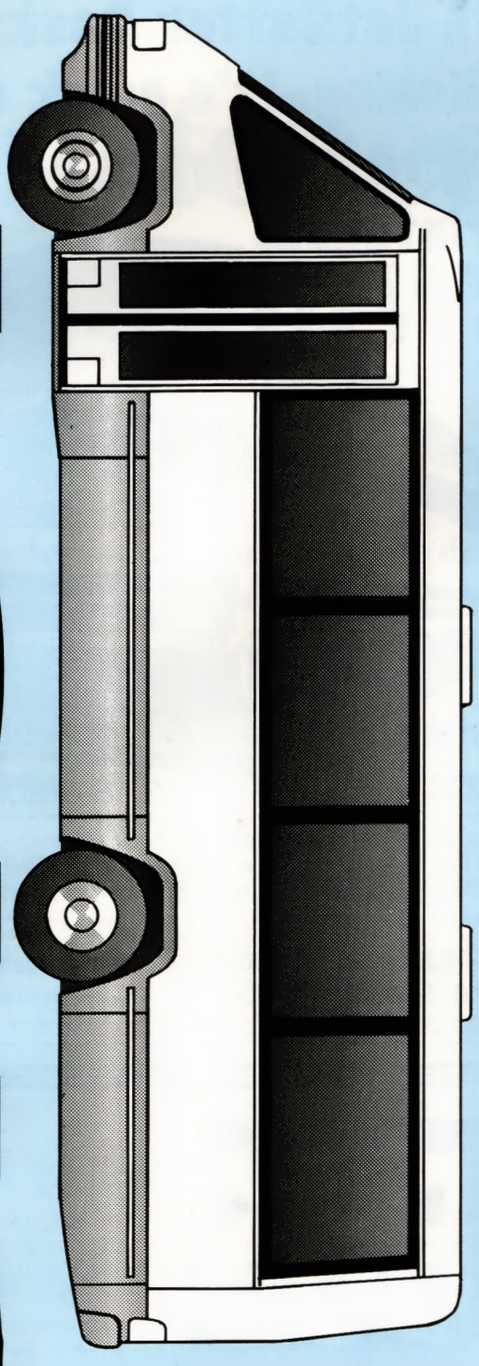
This is not quite true. Government has been faced with a need, because of the franchising system, to extend a significant measure of protection to the long established franchised bus operators. This was perceived to be essential in Hong Kong since adequate public transport throughout the Territory and, more recently, good quality bus services, are vital to our prosperity and stability. Indeed, Government has done much to encourage the franchised bus operators over the years.

That, perhaps, the various forms of encouragement have not quite been as successful as was anticipated is what led to mavericks like Citybus losing patience with the system and taking it upon themselves to induce change to a more business orientated and competitive bus operating environment.

Over the past 20 years, we have met with some success in achieving our aims and what we are now witnessing is the beginning of the end of the old environment and a simultaneous move towards a new dawn in public transport provision for Hong Kong.

Lyndon Rees
Managing director
Hong Kong Citybus
Lai Chok Road
Kowloon
Hong Kong

The LONG and the SHORT



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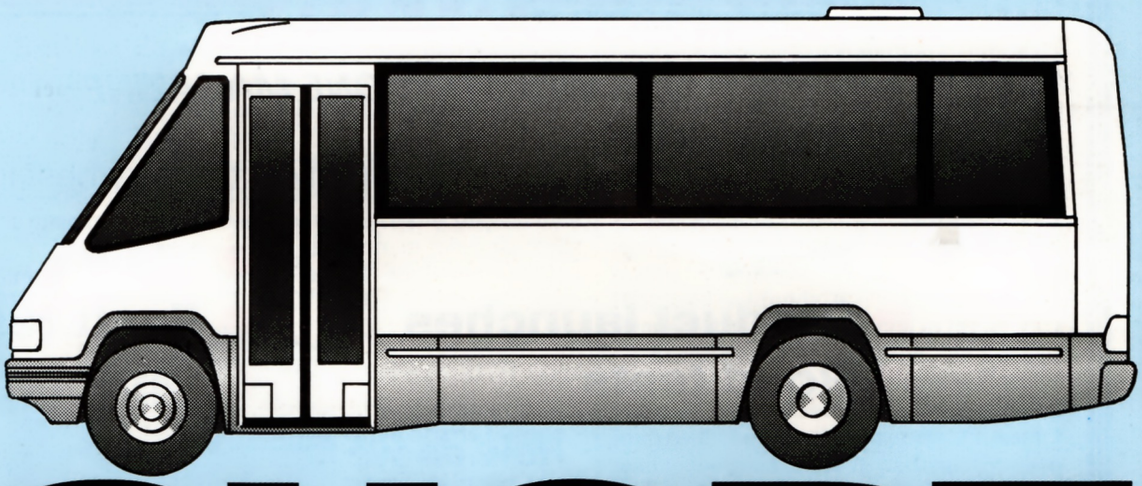

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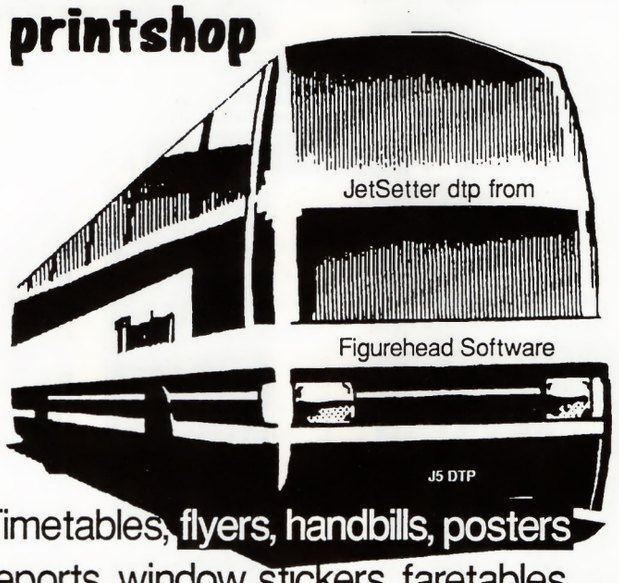

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Snatched from jaws of war

Civil war in Yugoslavia closed the door on the supply of budget-priced new coaches. But David Bennett of Uxbridge was undeterred. Against all the odds he flew out to Skopje at the height of the conflict and returned with four new vehicles. Mike Morgan reports

Four J-reg Charismas - three more to come

THIS year's Belgrade Motor Fair was one of the most sombre affairs in the European coach calendar. Once the magnet for the former-eastern block coach and bus manufacturers, this showpiece in the state of Slovenia could only reflect the turmoil and trauma caused by the internal conflict which has ravaged Yugoslavia.

A surprise survivor of the war is the massive manufacturing capacity which forms part of the FFB co-operative. FFB is one of the many flags which relate to a family of products emanating from factories in Skopje, Priboj, and Hrasnica. To UK eyes the Yugoslav PSV industry is characterised by the economy buys from DSB - the TAZ Dubrava - and Ensign - the Charisma from FFB.

The Dubrava has suffered an unceremonious departure, while the Charisma from Skopje still has a tenuous foothold thanks to Alan Wilson PSV of Ratby taking over the parts and servicing from Ensign. As yet this arrangement has failed to generate any new vehicles - though rumour has it that something will appear.

Meanwhile the road from Skopje in Macedonia was host to a mysterious convoy heading west. No, not military hardware, or relief vehicles returning from the strife-torn population, but four very dirty 0303 shaped coaches. There's greater intrigue when you investigate further and note that the driver sits on our familiar right-hand side.

Four desperately unlucky heroes had been selected to leave wife and family on a trading mission which was geared to generate much needed foreign currency for their homeland. Their destination was Belgium where Uxbridge coach operator, David Bennett waited.

Mr Bennett had taken the first Charisma back in 1989, bought two more and placed an order for three show vehicles. Detective work and considerable determination led him to Skopje where he did a deal on four more. The consequence is that his Hamilton Services coach operation is destined to run the first and the last Charismas to enter the UK - unless Alan Wilson can negotiate further supplies.

Having developed a passion for the earning power of the low-cost Yugoslav product is one thing, but risking life and limb to accumulate a few more in war-time really takes some explaining. Mr Bennett hadn't even experienced the problems of importing before, let alone the vagaries of persuading our own authorities to issue a certificate of initial fitness. He confesses that the tilting procedure "nearly gave me heart failure."

However, money saved must have tipped the balance in favour of high risk. Test preparation alone cost him £2,800 per coach. To that he had to add new hoses and hinges to overcome known reliability problems together with the inevitable bolt-on expenses of bringing vehicles across boarders and Channel.

But first we must retrace our steps to those three Charismas that attracted Mr Bennett's cheque-book when on display at the 1991 Kortrijk coach show. Before delivery could start, Ensign pulled-out and the deposit was returned. The coaches then quietly slipped away.

By chance one of Hamilton's Dubrava's suffered an engine failure in France, ended up at European Coach of Bruges for repair and what should be there? - three Charisma coaches. Two full-size 315s and one midi-sized 311 - the first for the UK.

Contact with Genex, the Yugoslav export agency, released the trio and identified the quartet languishing in Macedonia. "Then they had a bloody war," exclaimed Mr Bennett, "but they still wanted us to go."

At the height of hostilities, Mr Bennett and his associate Tom Frampton of Romney Coaches headed for Heathrow clutching airline tickets and passports. "I wasn't feeling too good about it, particularly when we found there was nobody at the checkout." Eventually 10 others shared a nervous flight.

Once past the point of no return they landed in Belgrade before transfer to Skopje in the south. Mr Bennett is full of admiration for the reception. "They looked after us regally - well they would have done if they'd had the good things in life."

The four coaches which were the focus of ➔

After a dramatic drive across Europe, David Bennett's travel-stained coaches were impounded at Dover

all this brave activity were dug out of the factory compound and a deal agreed to complete them to Mr Bennett's specification. He remains tight-lipped about the financial details, but whatever the the merits of the venture his troubles were far from over.

Target date for delivery was January to keep finances neatly within a VAT quarter. Fog, frost and snow held things up. Then there was the question of having the coaches serviced by European Coach in Bruges, an accident with a Belgian Army truck, one coach lost in Germany and some penniless delivery drivers anxious to return home. Enough to deter all but the most hardy of entrepreneurs.

Everything was in place for transfer to Dover by the middle of February. Meanwhile another dark cloud hovered menacingly over the proceedings. Prior to the civil war Yugoslavia was party to the General Scheme of Preference which offered a rebate on the 20 per cent import duty. Brussels in its wisdom imposed sanctions which cancelled the scheme. It mattered not that Macedonia had been reinstated because the officials at Dover docks had nothing in writing.

With coaches impounded and patience running short, the duty, plus VAT, had to be paid - in cash. The good news is that this money is in the process of being repaid. The other good news is that four coaches are now in this country earning Hamilton Services money, while the other three are being painted in Belgium.

Was it all worthwhile? Yes. "I've done what I said what I'd do and we've got the 311 on the road."

Conscious of the willing co-operation received from the poverty stricken workforce in Skopje, Mr Bennett said: "We want to help the Yugoslav's get off the ground." He's seen the range of other vehicle types built by the factory and has an eye on something completely different. "We want to go out and get them to build a prototype. But I don't want to be a dealer."

Midi-sized Charisma: first for the UK

So it's over to you Mr Wilson. Fresh from a trip to Belgrade the message from the Leicestershire dealer was oozing with confidence - perhaps an alternative Cummins/Allison drive-line.

Maybe something totally different will emerge and the possibilities for speculation are endless. Among the vehicles manufactured in an area of the world with very low factory overheads is an ideal Bedford replacement. - the FAP-Sanos S-415.5 MVP. But only time will tell.

Alan Wilson PSV has cast its net for a big fish and is ready to haul in a product with special appeal to a cash-strapped UK market. While David Bennett is making money with high-profile J-reg coaches the rest of the industry will be looking east for a vehicle at a price to match its earning power.

Whoever eventually brings them in will have to accept that lower overheads are a thinly-disguised cover for over-manning and relaxed quality control. Among Mr Bennett's many anecdotes are stories reflecting a flexible approach to production.

A toilet door on one Charisma lacked a suitable handle because supplies had dried-up. Undeterred one of the many factory supervisors turned and eventually returned brandishing a fitting which previously adorned an office door.

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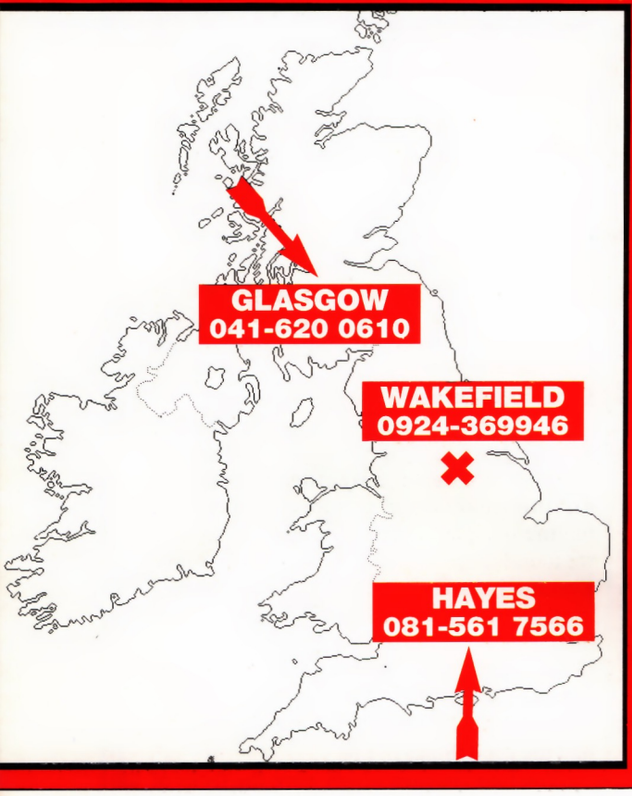

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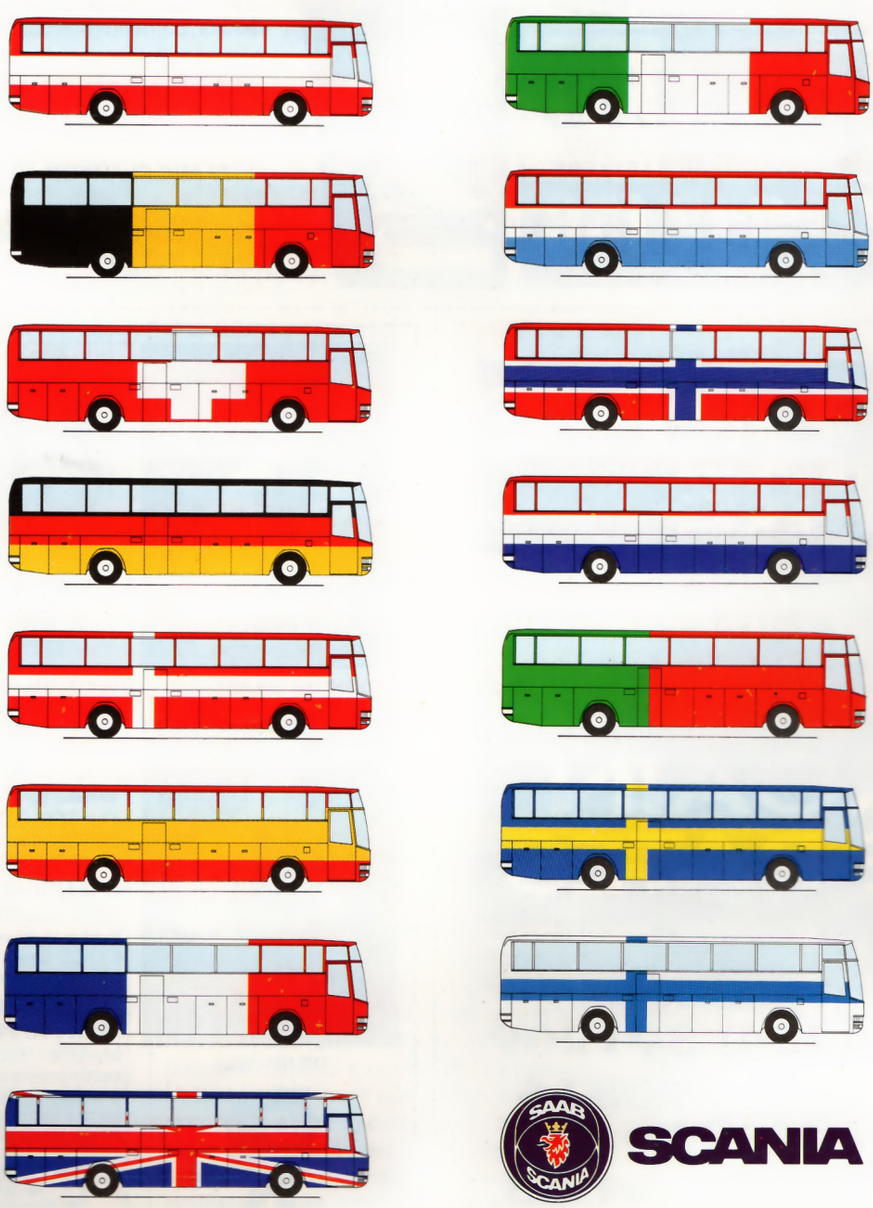

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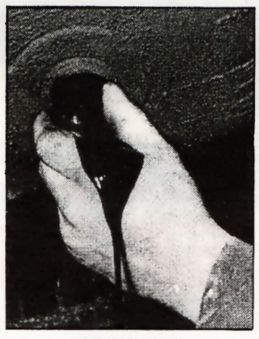

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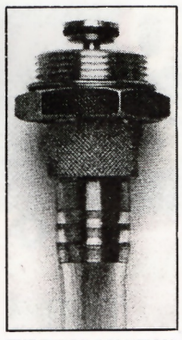

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Deckers bear brunt of bus sales slump

SALES of double-deck buses slumped by more than a third in 1991, writes *Paul Heels*. They now stand at little more than 40 per cent of the 800 recorded in 1989. Over 40 per cent of new deckers were for London operators.

Five major customers outside London, GM Buses, Lothian, Busways, Yorkshire Rider and Stagecoach bought at least 20 deckers, together accounting for a further 43 per cent of the total. The majority of the remaining 50 deckers were destined for smaller municipal operators. As passenger traffic levels continue to fall, new double deckers seem to be increasingly confined to Britain's largest cities.

Leyland's Olympian remains the market leader, with its market share staying little changed at over 50 per cent. The Olympian remains the standard decker for Lothian who placed 36 in service and Stagecoach who added almost 30 to their fleets. Other large customers in London were operators Walthamstow Citybus (29) and BTS (14). Together, these four customers accounted for 55 per cent of Olympian deliveries.

Scania's N113 model managed to displace Volvo's Citybus from second place. Even so, Scania's sales were down by nearly a quarter. Most of the Scania's were for three large customers, Yorkshire Rider (32), London Buses (22) and Busways (10).

Dennis managed to achieve a 50 per cent increase in sales over the poor level recorded in 1990, taking the Dominator into third place. More than half of these were for the Capital Citybus fleets while GM Buses received 10 Dominators. The biggest proportionate drop in sales was experienced by Volvo's Citybus, down by nearly 70 per cent. Citybus sales are now a far cry from 1989 level of over 200. As a result, it was pushed from second to fourth place in the market. The majority of Citybus delivered were for London and Country (15) and GM Buses (10).

Finally 1991 saw DAF launch its new Spectra model, with the first being delivered to Reading. Whether the introduction of this stylish model will do anything to revive the flagging fortunes of the double decker remains to be seen.

Turning to bodywork, Alexander remained the market leader, with a slightly reduced market share of 40 per cent. Largest customers were Lothian and Stagecoach, for whom Olympians were bodied. Most of the remaining production was on Scania chassis for Yorkshire Rider, London Buses and Busways.

Northern Counties held on to second place, with a slightly reduced market share, despite the problems being created by being placed in administration. Northern Counties has always relied heavily on double deckers for its success, so its troubles were perhaps not surprising. Main customers in 1991 were Capital Citybus (31) and GM Buses, with Northern Counties building on all major chassis types available.

Although Leyland's sales of its own bodywork showed a significant improvement in 1991, with annual sales only averaging 56 over the last three years, Volvo's decision to close down production at its Workington plant can have surprised few people. Major customers were Armchair (18) and Capital Citybus (23).

East Lancashire sales slumped by more than 60 per cent, to a very modest level, as Drawlane subsidiaries, apart from London and Country, failed to buy any deckers.

DOUBLE-DECK BUSES: CHASSIS

	Number delivered		% of Total	
	1990	1991	1990	1991
DAF	-	1	-	0.3
Dennis	30	46	5.7	13.9
Leyland	289	175	54.7	53.0
Scania	94	72	17.8	21.8
Volvo	115	36	21.8	10.9
TOTAL	528	330		
Imports	209	108	39.6	32.7

Source: PSV Circle

BODYWORK

% of Total	Number delivered			
	1990	1991	1990	1991
Alexander	235	135	44.5	40.9
East Lancashire	75	28	14.2	8.5
Leyland	46	64	8.7	19.4
Northern Counties	172	102	32.5	30.9
Optare	-	1	-	0.3
TOTAL	528	330		
Dual Purpose	30	34	5.7	10.3

Source: PSV Circle

Leyland Olympian: 175 sales

Dennis Dominator: 46 sales

Scania: 72 sales

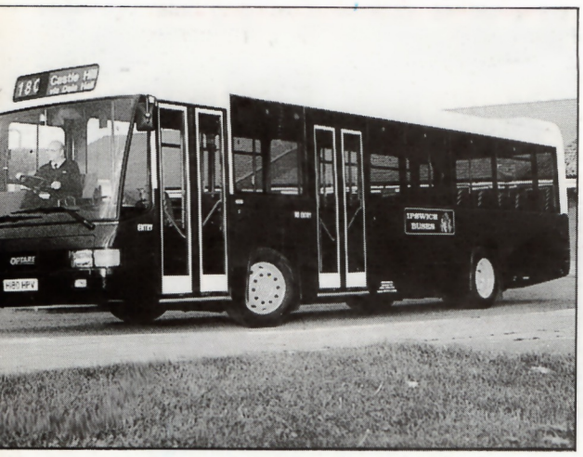
Volvo: 36 sales

Dart props up market for single-deckers

Dennis Dart: up a third

Leyland Lynx: sales collapse

Scania: 15 sold



DAF: sales success

SALES of Dennis's Dart 'midibus' pushed ahead, rising by a third despite the poor state of the PSV market, helped by the introduction of a 9.8-metre variant, writes *Paul Heels*. Meanwhile, sales of full- sized single deckers slumped by more than 40 per cent, to only 336. Will midibus sales overtake the full-sized single decker in 1992?

The huge success of the Dart made Dennis the runaway market leader, despite only selling a handful of full-sized Falcon and Javelin buses. As in the previous year, the vast majority of Darts were destined for service in London - over 80 per cent in this case, but the remainder went to a wide variety of operators.

Meanwhile, Leyland sales slumped by more than a half. Small wonder, then, that production of the Leyland models have ceased. Lynx deliveries, which in 1989 and 1990 had been bolstered by a huge order for West Midlands, slumped to well below 100. Half the Lynxes were for the Caldaire fleets, with most of the remainder going to municipal operators.

Leyland's Tiger remains the standard bus for the Ulsterbus and Citibus fleets in Northern Ireland, 74 going into service in 1991. Around 20 of the Swift midibus were sold to various operators.

After Leyland, DAF was the second biggest supplier of full-sized single deckers. Its SB220 model is now well established on the British market and enjoyed a further modest rise in sales, helped by large orders from Trent and Blackpool.

Just behind DAF was Volvo, with its mid-engined B10M model. South Yorkshire received a report order for 40, while Shearings also switched from the Tiger to the B10M for its bus requirements. Meanwhile, sales of Scania's N113 model remained very modest.

Alexander took the lead in the supply of single-deck bodywork - 60 per cent of these were built at its Belfast plant, including the Tigers for the local fleets and the Shearings Volvo's. Output from the Falkirk factory was dominated by the South Yorkshire Volvos.

Reeve Burgess introduced its Pointer bodywork in 1991. In its first year it proved the most popular choice of bodywork on the Dart. This was helped by the demise, during the year, of Carlyle, who, in succession to Duple, had monopolised the bodying of the Dart when it was first introduced. Meanwhile, Wright supplied nearly 100 of its Handy bus model on Dart chassis to London Buses from its Northern Ireland factory.

The collapse of Lynx sales pushed Leyland from first to fourth place in the bodywork table. More than three quarters of the DAF SB 220 were bodied by Optare. However, in 1991, for the first time, Hungarian Ikarus bodywork was offered as an alternative to the Delta model.

An interesting development reflecting the rising price of new chassis, has been the growing popularity of rebodying chassis, with East Lancashire and Willowbrook being the leading suppliers of such vehicles.

Wadham Stringer enjoyed modest sales, mainly of midibuses. Plaxton and Northern Counties both introduced new models in 1991, but neither had attracted significant orders by the year end.

SINGLE-DECK BUSES: BODYWORK

	Number delivered		% of total	
	1990	1991	1990	1991
Alexander	109	156	13.4	23.3
Carlyle	141	60	17.3	10.6
Duple	40	1	4.9	0.2
East Lancashire	39	30	4.8	4.7
Ikarus	-	17	-	2.7
Leyland	338	85	41.4	13.4
Northern Counties	1	2	0.1	0.3
Optare	60	57	7.3	9.0
Plaxton	42	6	5.1	0.9
Reeve Burgess	7	118	0.9	18.6
Wadham Stringer	7	16	0.9	2.5
Willowbrook	5	17	0.6	2.7
Wright	28	105	3.4	16.5
TOTAL	817	670		
Rebodies	15	35	1.8	5.5
Dual Purpose	77	75	9.4	11.8
MidiBus*	218	303	26.7	47.7

Source: PSV Circle
*less than 11m long.

SINGLE DECK BUSES: CHASSIS

	Number delivered		% of total	
	1990	1991	1990	1991
DAF	60	74	7.5	11.7
Dennis	240	292	29.9	46.0
Leyland	392	182	48.9	28.7
Scania	20	15	2.5	2.4
Volvo	88	71	11.0	11.2
Others	2	1	0.2	0.2
TOTAL	802	635		
Imports	169	160	21.1	25.2

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1986 (C) VOLVO B10M CAETANO ALGARVE. 49/53 seats, centre toilet, TV/video, courier seat, double glazing and curtains.

1986 (C) LAG PANORAMIC INTEGRAL KITCHEN COACH, 46 reclining seats, with rear servery, full air conditioning, rear floor mounted toilet, water boiler, fridge plus usual executive features.

1985 (C) DAF MB 230 LAG GALAXY. High floor, 49/53 demountable, sunken rear toilet, TV & video, boiler, bunk, double glazed, Webasto, carpets & curtains, retrimmed throughout in brown. Finished in white.

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Mibbo Thandi wins a renewal and increase

YOUR WEEKLY REPORT ON LAW AND THE COACH AND BUS OPERATOR BY MICHAEL JEWELL

MIBBO Singh Thandi's Transol Ltd has succeeded in winning the renewal of its eight-vehicle standard national licence, at a Birmingham public inquiry before the West Midland Traffic Commissioner, Mr John Mervyn Pugh.

Last December maintenance problems led to the duration of the Wednesbury-based company's licence being cut so that it expired at the end of February.

Mr Thandi said that everything had been much brighter since the last public inquiry and he had not collected any prohibitions. The maintenance system that had been recommended, together with the adequate maintenance facilities at the company's operating centre, had done wonders for them. Things had gone wrong in the past when they got involved with National Express.

'It is a great pleasure for me to give you a licence. Thank you for your co-operation. This is a maintenance system which works and you have proved it' - West Midland Traffic Commissioner John Mervyn Pugh

Mr Mervyn Pugh said he had introduced Mr Thandi to a system of maintenance with driver daily nil reporting, a flow chart showing when vehicles were to be inspected, and a letter sent to drivers and fitters setting out all their responsibilities. In addition, Mr Thandi had attended a new operators' seminar.

"It is a great pleasure for me to give you a licence," said Mr Mervyn Pugh. "Thank you for your co-operation. This is a maintenance system which works and you have proved it. I said at the last public inquiry that, if I could make a good operator out of you then I could pat myself on the back, and I will.'

Promising that he would definitely stick to the recommended maintenance system, Mr Thandi said that the company was applying for an extra three vehicles. Mr Mervyn Pugh said the DTpVehicle Inspectorate had reported that the operating centre and maintenance facilities were ideal and the vehicle condition and maintenance records appeared to be satisfactory.

Granting renewal with the increase in authorisation, Mr Mervyn Pugh said: "I cannot tell you how pleased I am."

Esprit Travel trio fail to turn up at magistrates'

THE three partners in Goostrey-based Esprit Travel, whose PSV operator's licence was recently suspended by the North Western Traffic Commissioner, have been fined by the Manchester City Magistrates for using a vehicle without an excise licence and without a fire extinguisher.

Stephen Caper, Stephen Oulton and Gary Plant failed to appear before the magistrates to answer the charges.

DTp traffic examiner, Michael Power, said that a vehicle with more than eight seats was required to carry a fire extinguisher

DTp traffic examiner, Michael Power, said that a vehicle with more than eight seats was required to carry a fire extinguisher. He was on duty last July in West Didsbury when he spotted a 53-seater vehicle belonging to Esprit Travel.

The vehicle, which was parked at the roadside, was being driven by a Mark Rowlinson. There were 80 school children on board. Neither he nor the driver could find a fire extinguisher. An examination of the excise licence revealed that it was out of date, having expired at the end of May 1991.

A statement was read to the court from traffic examiner Jane Windsor, who said that, when she interviewed Mr Caper, he had said the vehicle concerned had been off the road due to an engineering fault during June and part of July.

During that time the fire extinguisher had been stolen. The expired excise licence had been due to an oversight. The back duty had been paid the day after the offence.

The magistrates found the charges proved. They fined each partner £150, ordering them to pay £25 back duty and £90 prosecution costs.

Partner fined for letting learner drive school bus

GARFIELD Deeble, a partner in Darley Ford Coaches, of Darley Ford, near Liskeard, has been fined £300 by South East Cornwall Magistrates for permitting various offences by drivers.

Mr Deeble pleaded guilty to allowing an 18-year-old provisional licence holder, Joanna Coombes, to drive a school bus without qualified supervision last September; to permitting driver David Baker to fail to complete a tachograph chart on June 30 and to permitting Mr Baker to fail to take sufficient daily rest on July 1.

Prosecuting for the Department of Transport, Philip Kidd said that, last month, Mr Deeble had been fined £4,050 and ordered to pay £250 prosecution costs, after admitting 30 other offences.

When interviewed, Mr Deeble had admitted that the conditions of a provisional licence had not been complied with, said Mr Kidd.

The onus was on the employer to ensure that drivers' record sheets were properly completed. The EEC Regulations required a driver to have not less than nine hours rest in any 24-hour period. Mr Baker had had no more than seven hours.

Defending, Andrew Deacon said: "Darley Ford Coaches seems to be a firm time left behind. They try to be all things to all men and try to compete on an even keel with companies with far greater resources than they have."

Mr Deacon said that the firm was trying to replace the manager who had since left.

"They are so busy chasing their tails, trying to earn a living, that they do not stand there, step back and think what they are doing," he said.

The school bus incident had occurred in an emergency. It was a relatively short drive and Miss Coombes was replaced at a layby. There had been confusion over the drivers' rest provisions.

Miss Coombes, who admitted driving the school bus without supervision, was fined £75.

Two-year licence only for Stuarts Bus & Coach Co

THE PSV operator's licence held by Stuarts Bus & Coach Co Ltd, of Hyde, was renewed for a two-year period only, by the North Western Deputy Traffic Commissioner, Kenneth Birchall, at a Manchester public inquiry.

DTp vehicle examiner, Simon Bruno, said that, during a maintenance investigation in December and January, one vehicle a day was fully inspected at the Bredbury testing station. Two prohibitions were issued, one immediate and one delayed.

The immediate prohibition was for a defect to the power steering. When that vehicle was re-presented, the prohibition was varied due to defective wind-screen washers and brakes.

Generally, the condition of the vehicles showed great improvement. With the facilities, and the age of the fleet, it would be difficult to achieve any more, but it would be very easy to let things slip. The vehicles were said to be inspected at four-weekly intervals and repaired at the same time. A driver defect reporting system was in operation. Brake testing was carried out at the test station.

There had been no change in the maintenance facilities since the last public inquiry, said Mr Bruno. He had been told that the drivers had been educated to look after their vehicles. The maintenance records showed improvement, but they did not substantiate that the vehicles were being inspected every four weeks. The parking situation at the operating centre had not improved. The road outside had deteriorated rapidly. In his opinion, there were too many vehicles for the size of the premises and it was only a matter of time before the maintenance standards start to slip again.

Stuarts is looking for new premises

In reply to John Backhouse, for the company, Mr Bruno said Stuarts was making an effort to get things right. The road leading to the premises was an unadopted road and it was not busy.

Mr Birchall said that, last September, maintenance was unsatisfactory and he was given certain undertakings. He decided to only issue a warning on that occasion, as the licence was due to expire in January.

Mr Bruno said that there had an improvement in maintenance since then. However, records did not exist for all of the vehicles he had inspected. The company were using four different types of inspection sheets. In his opinion, the operating centre was only capable of holding 15 vehicles.

Managing director, Michael Stuart, said the company had 17 licence discs and 23 or 24 vehicles in possession. Temporary arrangements had been made to park 12 vehicles at two other sites. The company recognised the premises were too small and had employed a firm for two years to try to locate suitable alternative premises.

It was currently negotiating for a one-acre site in Tameside. It was a bare site and the negotiations included the building of new premises. He expected the company to be in the new premises within 18 months.

Mr Stuart said that the type of inspection sheet recommended by the vehicle examiner was now in use and the four-weekly inspection period was being adhered to.

Mr Birchall said he did not believe the company could park 18 vehicles at its operating centre, but Mr Stuart said, taking account of the other two parking areas, it was possible to park all the company's vehicles off the road at any one time. He gave an undertaking that vehicles would not be parked on the road outside the operating centre.

Mr Stuart admitted vehicles were washed on the unadopted road every night and Mr Birchall said that must cause problems.

Martin Arthur, assistant planning engineer with Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, said there had been a stream of complaints from local residents. The size of the operating centre was inade-quate for the number of vehicles and the premises were not large enough for maintenance.

Mr Arthur said vehicles were left unattended on the road with their engines running. There had been diesel and oil spillage on the road when maintenance was carried out. Vehicles blocked the road and employees' vehicles caused a nuisance.

A planning enforcement notice had been issued in respect of the premises, and that was the subject of an appeal by the company.

Mr Backhouse said Stuarts partly owned the road outside the premises. If there were problems relating to the road, they would have to be settled by other means.

Mr Birchall said he was not there to consider environmental issues. Undertakings had been given that no unattended vehicles would be parked on the street and that full use would be made of the alternative parking arrange-ments. There was little more that he could do. Certain matters regarding maintenance were still not 100 per cent. Great improvements had been made but further steps could still be taken.

Green light for Pleasureline Travel

GRAHAM Pickersgill, who was previously involved with Tenby Bus Co, has been granted a PSV operator's licence in his own name, trading as Pleasureline Travel, of Saundersfoot, by South Wales Traffic Commissioner, John Mervyn Pugh.

Mr Pickersgill had applied for a licence authorising three single deckers at a Cardiff public inquiry.

The problems with Tenby Bus Co had caused a lot of antagonism, leaving a lot of unhappy people, Mr Mervyn Pugh said, and Mr Pickersgill was unhappy too, having put £35,000 into that bus company and lost it. Investigations had revealed that Mr Pickersgill had been employed as a driver. He had made a genuine effort, but everything had gone tragically wrong and the company went into liquidation. If the information that had been obtained was published, the public would realise that Mr Pickersgill was not involved and had been "taken for a ride" by that bus company.

After being told that allegations concerning a Mr Banner were untrue, but could not be disproved, Mr Mervyn Pugh said that, if he became involved with the new operation there could be difficulties.

Mr Pickersgill said he had not yet bought any vehicles. When he did, they would be put through MoT tests before being put on the road. Granting the licence, Mr Mervyn Pugh said: "Everything now seems to be in order. You are lucky to have survived such a terrible loss."

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Car Chair's window of opportunity

Mike Morgan has a close look at the first body on chassis by Hailsham-based Car Chair. He finds that close co-operation with the operator, Solent Blue Line, has paid off

THE launch of a new PSV is worthy of special attention at the best of times, but the first from a new bodybuilder at the time of depressed sales gives new hope to a beleaguered industry. The first bus to be built by Sussex-based Car Chair Vehicle Builders rolled off the production line complete with structural and design features destined to set the company apart.

Within a breath-taking four months, managing director David Constable, expanded the car-mobility business into coachbuilding and opened a new factory in Hailsham. The team behind the new division includes Robbie Hood of the late lamented Robin Hood Vehicle Builders and Ken Frost, previously with Dormobile.

The first vehicle is one of an order for eight 23-seater, plus five standee, midibuses for Southern Vectis subsidiary, Solent Blue Line of Southampton. It is based on the Iveco 49.10 turbo chassis.

Although more than 1,200 Iveco Ford DailyBuses now operate in UK midibus fleets, there's a new DailyBus. New styling, new performance and new comfort in a range of 21 to 25 seater vehicles targeting intensive urban and rural low-volume passenger service operations.

From the start Blue Line chief engineer Wally Corney worked closely with the design team. Car Chair acquired some former-Robin Hood moulds, so the vehicle understandably bears a family likeness to previous models from that source. But this is more than a Robin Hood look alike. It has features all of its own.

It is designed to accommodate a full-sized destination box while retaining a flat roof and full-size windscreen. Unusual for a 23-seater it has 1,200 mm fast-flow entrance, 610 mm wide gangway and a floor to roof luggage pen behind the drivers bulkhead. All four features were specified by Blue line's operational director, Peter Shelley, in his search for the 'ideal small bus.' Blue Line specified longitudinal seating on the nearside to provide adequate passenger circulation with 90 cm bus seating. Mr Corney said: "We didn't want the situation where standing passengers had to get out of the bus to allow others to get off."

A key feature, developed by Car Chair, is the fibreglass front end which retains Iveco styling while saving weight - an asset for stop-start bus operation. This full width assembly helps drivers position the vehicle on the road better than the tapered Iveco steel cowl. In the event of error, replacement bumpers for the front are inexpensive and easily fitted.

Mr Constable said: "Our philosophy is to keep maintenance costs down. This was one reason for fitting Peugeot-Talbot standard-sized windscreens, unless a customer specifies otherwise. The one used on this bus is readily available and costs only £125."

SPECIFICATION

Chassis:	**Iveco 49-10**
Body:	**first production Car Chair - 25-seat bus**
Price:	**£33,958**
Engine:	**103.5 bhp Iveco four-cylinder 2,499 cc in-line turbo-charged direct injection - torque 175.1 Lbf at 2,000 rpm**
Gearbox:	**Iveco 2824 - five speed**
Rear axle:	**ratio - 5.22:1**
DIMENSIONS	
Length:	**7.1 metres**
Width:	**2.2 metres**
Height:	**2.8 metres**
Unladen weight:	**3,150 kg**
GVW:	**5,200 kg**
PERFORMANCE	
Average fuel consumption:	**15.36 mpg**
Test route:	**Hailsham, Eastbourne town centre, Beachy Head, Newhaven, Rottingdean, Lewes town centre, Hailsham town centre - average speed: 26 mph**
Distance:	**52.07 miles (83.8 kms)**
Fuel used:	**3.39 gallons (15.4 litres)**
Acceleration:	**0-30 mph - 8 secs 0-50 mph - 23 secs**
Front interior noise levels:	**at 45 mph in top gear (3,000 rpm) - 78 dB(A) at 52 mph in top gear (3,500 rpm) - 80 db(A)**

Car Chair has also come up with a new material for the roof lining to meet Blue Line's request for a bright ceiling and airy interior.

Flexible, easily shaped and easy clean, the material is fitted without expensive moulds. It also does away with the need for rivets in the roof.

Another innovation is Car Chair's technique of flexible rubber body mounting to avoid problems of fatigue fractures.

The company has given lighting special attention. Interior lighting is in optional concealed units, but the high-light is the illumination of the entrance steps. To throw light on to the pavement, as well as the steps, the bus is fitted with six lights - four on the three step entrance and two externally below the step.

Mr Constable said: "This has been a real team effort. Solent Blue Line had a clear idea of what it wanted and we have been able to accommodate their specifications."

A brief drive round the townships of East Sussex confirmed the 49.10's driveability. Steering is light and precise while the gear-change is one of the best in the business. The bus spec chassis had 5.22:1 rear axle which gives phenomenal hill climbing ability and very adequate acceleration. After a mere 7,500 kms there was a trace of clutch judder - suggesting that the engine's perceived flexibility could be abused. Unladen it could take-off from rest in third gear.

Overall fuel consumption on the 50 mile bus route was a shade over 15 mpg. An average speed of 26 mph reflects the type of driving through towns and countryside along the coastal strip between Eastbourne and Brighton.

The driver's seat lacks sufficient adjustment for anyone with longer than average legs. Perhaps it's ideal for most Italian drivers, but otherwise the controls are too close for comfort.

There were three bodywork drawbacks: a draught between the chassis/cowl and the body; inadequate demister performance; and questionable supervision of the entrance area.

The latter point is a compromise feature of the wide fast-flow entrance set behind the driver. However, the first two received speedy attention from Mr Constable who announced instant modifications - proof that the young company is anxious to accelerate its learning curve and succeed where others have failed.

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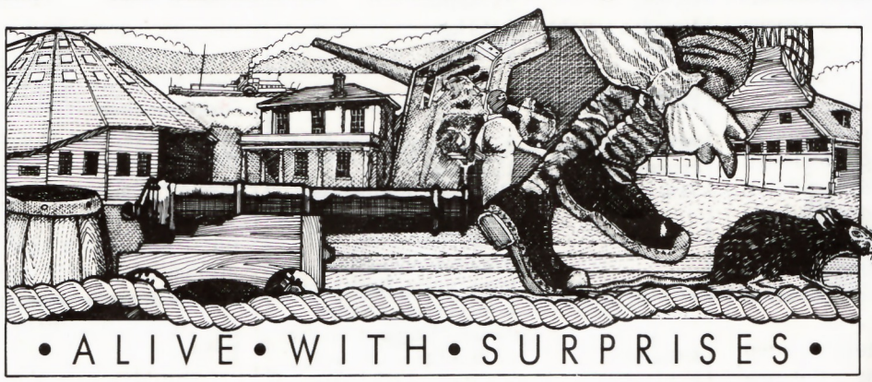

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COACH TOURS & EXCURSIONS

Buds of May gateway open

WHOLESALER Golden Gateway has teamed up with Kent Tourism to offer coach operators the 'official' tour of Kent based on the fantastically successful Darling Buds of May television series.

According to Golden Gateways, the Darling Buds of May logo, title, location, photographs and the word 'Perfick' are copyright property and may be used only by its clients who buy the official group package.

The two day/one night package includes dinner, bed and breakfast accommodation at a three star hotel and features a guided tour of villages and locations used in the chart topping ITV series. Also included is a visit to a new H E Bates Darling Buds of May themed attraction at the open air Museum of Kent Life at Sandling, near Maidstone.

The package is priced at £39 per person, including VAT and service, based on two people sharing a twin or double room. Single room supplement is £10. Extra nights are bookable. Coach drivers go free.

An optional extra is free admission to Kent's newest attraction, the South of England Rare Breeds Centre, a 90-acre site on the edge of Romney Marsh at Woodchurch, near Tenterden.

Also available to coach operators is a sales support kit, which includes shell brochures and posters, advertisements and press release material and brochures to help plan Kent-based tours.

Contact Golden Gateways on 0892 511808.

A shopping magnet

OVER 200,000 of the 25 million visitors a year going to the Merry Hill Centre in the West Midlands go as part of organised coach tours.

Over 4,000 coaches are already scheduled to visit the centre this year, an increase of around 40 per cent on last year, bringing visitors from both the UK and Europe.

"Coach operators arriving at the centre are typically travelling 150-180 miles, with over half coming over 75 miles to visit the centre," said Joe Green, transport consultant to the centre and private sector county representative for the Heart of England Tourist Board.

Every coach arriving at the centre's coach park is greeted by a centre representative who introduces visitors to the events, entertainments and facilities at Merry Hill.

Merry Hill: popular with operators

Full details from Lesley Marsh on 0384 481141.

Hotel Deals

Coaches welcome

TWO hotels in Berkshire are making a determined push for coach parties over the weekends.

Taplow House Hotel and its sister establishment, the Royal Adelaide in Windsor, are offering reduced rates for groups during what for them are the quieter days of Saturday and Sunday.

The Royal Adelaide, over looking the famous the long walk in Windsor, has 40 bedrooms. Weekend group rates for dinner, bed and breakfast are £30. Taplow House Hotel is set in the country in over six acres of grounds, has 30 bedrooms.

Dinner, bed and breakfast group rate is £45 per person.

More details from sales manager, Catherine Powell, on 0628 70056.

Special rates in France

HOLIDAY Inn hotels in Dijon and Nantes, France, are offering special group rates this season.

At the Holiday Inn Garden Court Nantes, group rates per person are around £17, subject to exchange rates, with three people sharing a room; around £20 sharing a twin or double room and around £33 per single. Corresponding rates at the Holiday Inn Garden Court Dijon are £18.50, £21 and £36.50.

All rates include bed and full buffet breakfast, service and taxes. The hotels also offer one free half twin room for every 20 paying guests and have ample parking and turning space for coaches.

Holiday Inn, Nantes

More details from Janice Edwards at Holiday Inn Worldwide. Tel: 0295 272278.

Coach excursions included

STAKIS Hotels has extended its popular Seniors programme for older holidaymakers.

The short break four day packages, hosted by retired Stakis hotel manager, Robert Gordon and his wife, Nessie, include an informal programme of excursions by coach around sites of local interest, dinner and full buffet breakfast, specialist talks and Saturday night entertainment.

Prices start at £98 per person and the over 60s get a further 10 per cent discount.

More details from Ailsa Macmillan on 041 304 1421.

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Crystal clear Dartington

ALREADY one of the largest attractions in the south west with over 200,000 visitors each year, Dartington Crystal has spent over £1million on its award winning tourist centre.

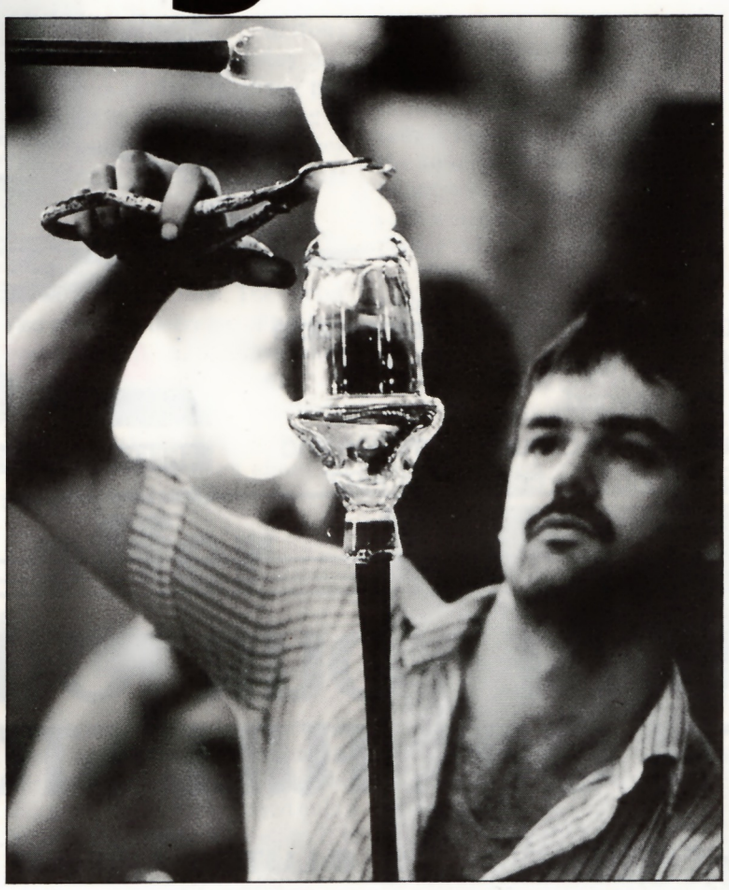
Improvements include an extended tour, new restaurant facilities and a new and greatly enlarged factory shop.

"Just for once the recession seems to be on our side," said Dartington's retail and tourism manager, Tessa Whittingslow. "We completed the new visitor facilties towards the end of last season and with even more holiday makers forecast to stay in Britain this year because of the economy, we are ready to offer those coming to Devon a really worthwhile day out."

Dartington's glass works is at Great Torrington in North Devon, about 45 minutes from the M5 motorway.

Full factory tours are available throughout the year from Monday to Friday 9.30 to 3.30pm. Extended opening hours apply during the summer (July to September).

Full tours information is available on 0805 24233.



Dartington Crystal in the making

More group visitors for adventure theme parks

THE American Adventure and Camelot theme parks have set their 1992 season group admission prices to attract more coach operators.

In 1991, attendance at both the Granada Great Adventure parks shot up by 30 per cent. And this year they have brought in a series of measures to build on that growth.

Most importantly, the all inclusive admission rates for pre-paid groups have been reduced by over 20 per cent, from £5.13 to £4.00 per person. Coach operators who are Premier Customer Account holders can buy tickets on a sale or return basis at a cost of £3.15 for the first 100 and £3.00 thereafter. They are asked by the parks not to sell them for less than £4. The tickets do not have a price, but a bar code, printed on them so that it is possible to monitor their use at the turnstiles. Operators are invoiced and given 30 days to pay for any tickets attributable to them.

Tony Cornford, marketing and sales manager at both parks, said: "We recognise the important part that our group business plays in our future plans and we believe that the initiatives we have taken fully reflect this."

Also new for 1992 are improved coach parks directly in front of admissions, fully equipped coach drivers' rest rooms and a free retail/meal voucher together with free admission for all coach drivers.

More details from Mike Dyche at the American Adventure Theme Park in Ilkeston on 0773 531521.

NEW GROUP PUBLICATIONS

■ DARLINGTON Borough Council has published its first ever Essentials for the Travel Trade and Group Organisers brochure for the borough. The A5 brochure gives full details of places of interest to groups, accommodation and coaching facilities, as well as listing contacts for talks, tours and demonstrations.

More details from Rachel Escott on 0325 460208.

■ A DIARY of events for 1992 is now available from **Walsall Leather Centre Museum. Tel: 0922 721153.**

■ THE Port of Boulogne has published its redesigned visitor brochure for the 1992 season. It has also compiled a calendar of events which are likely to be attractive to British holiday-makers.

More information from Jane Harvey on 071 723 3633.

■ DESTINATION Derbyshire is the new comprehensive guide to accommodation, attractions and events throughout the county for tour operators and the travel trade. The guide also contains separate factsheets giving details of all types of accommodation, factory shops and craft centres.

More details from Roland Sansom on 0246 231111 or Marion Nixon 0332 29311.

■ THE latest issue of Hundreds of Places to Visit in the South East is now available from the **South East Tourist Board, The Old Brew House, Warwick Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 5TU. Price £1.75.**

■ Attractions open to groups, hotels for groups and conferences and non-residential conference venues are all listed in the 1992/93 Yorkshire and Humberside Group Organisers and Conference Manual. It is available free from the **Yorkshire and Humberside Tourist Board. Tel: 0904 707961.**

■ A 1992 diary of events is now available to update the Tour Operators' Guide from English Heritage. There are over 50 events detailed, each selected with groups in mind. **Tel: 071 973 3000.**

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Tees Valley group travel

A NEW multiple options campaign for coaches and group travel has been launched by Tees Valley Tourism, highlighting a choice of tariffs, seasons, styles of hotel, destinations, themes and types of package.

Typically coach operators use the region mainly for one-night stops en route for north or south. But now, Tees Valley tourism is hoping to sell packages and longer stays. Among local attractions are a butterfly garden, smugglers' interpretation centre and maritime complex.

Half board prices in a choice of nearly 30 hotels cost from under £25. A choice of city, country house and coastal venues is available.

More details from Claire Norminton, Tees Valley Tourism on 0642 300671.

BTA: Britons stay at home

THE number of Britons taking a long holiday last year was up by three per cent to 54.25 million, according to the British National Travel Survey 1991 from the British Tourist Authority.

Holidays of four nights or more taken in Britain increased by five per cent to 34 million. The survey also reveals a decrease of two per cent to 20 million holidays taken abroad by the British in 1991.

BTA chairman, William Davis, said: "This survey provides valuable information about an important sector of the tourism market. It shows that tourism is more resilient than many industries and these figures reflect the extra efforts made by the tourist authorities and the industry in a particularly difficult year, which have encouraged more people to holiday in Britain.

"But it would be wrong to suggest that the effects of the recession have been totally overcome. Last year was difficult for the tourism industry - with fewer overseas visitors arriving from our long haul markets - and there is a tough challenge ahead to recover lost business."

The average cost per person of a foreign holiday in 1991 was £550, compared with £137 for a holiday in Britain. The West Country remains the most popular destination for those holidaying at home. It attracts nearly a quarter of all British holidays including a stay of at least one night.

August continued to be the single most popular month for taking a long holiday in Britain (23 per cent) but in 1991 some 40 per cent of additional holidays were taken off peak between April and October.

Special offer Jersey tour

THREE top Channel Islands operators have teamed up to produce an exclusive Autumn break for CBW readers. The two-night October holiday includes transfers from the port, bed and breakfast, en suite facilities, and a half-day coach tour with Blue Coach Tours...and all for £67.50 a head.

British Channel Island Ferries are well-known to operators, having operated and improved the Poole service which has won many accolades. They have joined forces with Modern Hotels to produce the deal, staying in top-class accommodation some of which has been recently added to the company's portfolio. The claim that hotels have no idea what coach operators want cannot easily be levelled at Modern Hotels. As the advert goes, it liked Blue Coach Tours so much it bought part of the company! Consequently, its approach to the group market is the same as yours, using the knowledge gained from decades of Blue Coach Tours' experience.

The coach firm is still run by the same family, managing director John Sawyer still having his hand on the helm. Based only a stone's throw from St Helier, it is also one of the best-known island tour operators. Modern Hotels is exactly that - a company set up with modern ideas in mind and with its eyes on the group travel market. Though the Channel Isles are pretty well fully booked throughout the peak months, there is a great deal of scope for good-value autumn breaks.

Modern already runs five hotels - including a small, 31-bed guest house - on the island. Its three biggest hotels are the Mayfair, the Metropole and the Aberfeldy. A smaller hotel, the Cambrai, can sometimes be booked by a single coach group for privacy.

The break represents at least 12 percent discount on the normal price, with the added assurance that, once your passengers have been loaded at Poole, they will be well cared for by companies experienced in the group market. British Channel Island Ferries' vessels have been fully refitted in the past 18 months, and are extremely comfortable. Cabins for night sailings are available at reasonable cost.

The only supplements in the deal are for half-board accommodation or single rooms. Everything else is built in to the price, including the en suite facilities.

Full details and bookings are available by 'phoning 0202 667799, and asking for October Blue Coach Special.

Sail your customers to Jersey... at a special price

BAWTA connection

BATH-BASED Coach Connection has joined the British Association of Wholesale Tour Operators (BAWTA). Membership now stands at eight companies, with two other applications awaiting approval.

More details from Stephen Moore at ICT on 071 538 4627.

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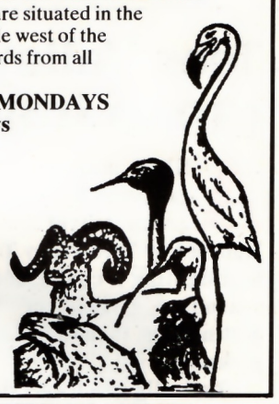

BIBURY trout farm

BIBURY TROUT FARM

Come and feed the trout!

A working farm in the heart of the Cotswolds.

Relax amidst beautiful surroundings.

Refreshments, gift shop, picnic sites, catch your own fish, plants.

Coaches welcome – Parking available (please ask)

Open every day until 6pm

BIBURY, CIRENCESTER, GLOS
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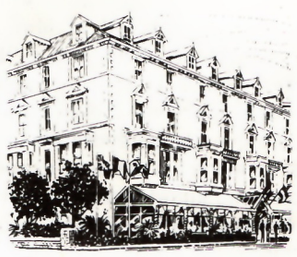
If you are planning a trip to North Wales or the North West Please read on . . .

The **LION & SWAN HOTEL** in Congleton, Cheshire is offering the ultimate Weekend Break for Theatre Lovers. From April '92, see **Les Miserables** at the Palace Theatre, Manchester, with one or two nights Dinner, Bed and Breakfast at this magnificent 16th century former coaching inn, lovingly refurbished to maintain all its Tudor elegance. 21 en suite bedrooms, oak beamed restaurant and bars. AA, RAC 3*, ETB 4 crown recommended.
For brochure, available dates and rates, please tel. 0260 275230 or 0260 273115.

The **CLARENCE HOTEL** is one of Llandudno's leading hotels and is always in demand for groups of all sizes. 63 bedrooms, the majority en suite, spacious restaurant, elegant lounge and bars with entertainment during the season. Bistro style pavement cafe and lift to all floors.



SUPERB VALUE GROUP RATES FOR 1992

Please Tel. 0260 275230 or 0492 860193

Zoos are back in fashion

FASHION moves in cycles, they say. And this is never more true than with the zoo-going public.

The days of the animal peepshow popularised by the Victorians are gone, but not the zoos. Back in fashion, wildlife attractions are now seen as a valuable resource from which animals can be bred for reintroduction to the wild or simply to maintain and 'Ark' species.

Most of the bars have gone from the cages, the cages themselves have become enclosures and the big, active animals which once drew the crowds are being replaced with smaller, happier creatures with plenty of room to move. Zoos are enjoying a renaissance.

The problems of London Zoo last year demonstrated that the public has the ultimate say in what is acceptable as a wildlife attraction. The result at the Regents Park attraction was a rapid rethink, with many large animals sent out to Whipsnade where there is more space, and more hands-on style enclosures at London Zoo.

Zoos have also had to address the problems posed by families. Aside from the many restaurant facilities, there are adventure playgrounds, interactive museums and exhibitions and even theme park-style rides. Added value is a concept zoos are rapidly having to understand.

From the operators viewpoint zoos are superb destinations

From the coach operator viewpoint, zoos are superb destinations. Access and parking is almost always ample for a large vehicle, the admission charges are relatively low and the attraction will provide entertainment for a full day in most cases. Drivers are usually well catered for, with free meals or vouchers to spend inside the attraction and a good opportunity to stretch their legs or doze in the sun.

One of the less obvious advantages of zoo visits is that the attraction is heavily fenced. The chances of your driver 'losing' someone are virtually zero!

London Zoo - saved from extinction

A close look at animal behaviour

LONDON Zoo has reached financial break-even and its gates, first opened in 1826, will remain open. Under changes made at the Regent's Park landmark, visitors will still be able to get up close to the 3,000 animals but they will also be able to see evidence of its captive breeding, wildlife management and conservation record

The summer season will start this month with a new Life in the Sea presentation. There will also be some new members in the Animals for Action shows. Joining Dana the Rough Necked Lemur and Tito the Barn Owl is Jack the Kookaburra and Ben the Brown Rat.

Three times daily, these presentations are themed around the animal's behaviour and the emphasis is very much on audience involvement.

Group rates, on parties of 20 or more, are £4.50 adult, £2.80 child and £3.70 student or OAP. Drivers are admitted free and given £2 lunch vouchers and £2 gift shop vouchers.

No booking is necessary, but operators can open an account. The zoo's group travel department will also supply promotional posters and a video to coach operators.

More details, including a new events programme, is available from Anita Waddell on 071 722 3333.

Sanctuary just an hour's drive from London

THE peaceful park gardens are a big attraction for groups visiting Stratfield Sayle House on the Hampshire /Berkshire border.

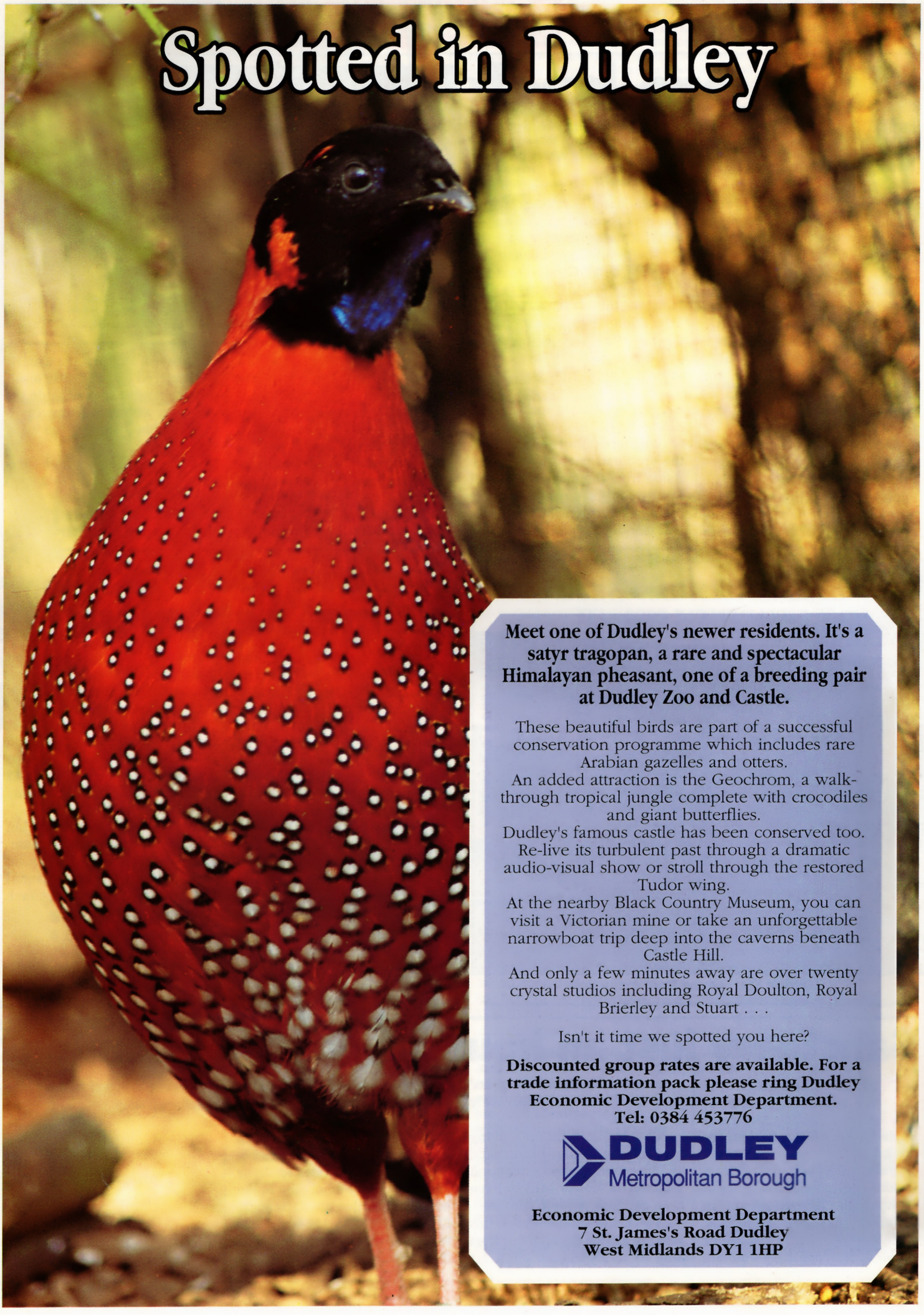
Just an hour's drive from London, the home of the Dukes of Wellington is situated in beautifully landscaped grounds, which lead down to the River Loddon. Refreshingly enough, there are no 'keep off the grass' signs and picnics are positively encouraged.

The grounds include many rare trees, a wildfowl sanctuary, an 18th century walled garden and a Camellia House said to have been designed by Joseph Paxton.

Two major outdoor events this year are a three day craft fair from May 23 to 25 and an open air concert on August 29 - part of the Bailey's Summer Stage series, complete with a firework finale.

The house is open daily from the beginning of May to the end of September. Group rates for 20 or more people for admission to the house and garden are £3.50 adult, £1.75 child (5 to 15) and £2.50 senior citizen or disabled. The driver gets in free and is given a £2 voucher to spend in the coffee or souvenir shop.

Contact Patrick Aubrey-Fletcher for group bookings on 0256 882882. To arrange a facility visit contact Saly Winsor at N B Public Relations on 0202 292397.



Meet one of Dudley's newer residents. It's a satyr tragopan, a rare and spectacular Himalayan pheasant, one of a breeding pair at Dudley Zoo and Castle.

These beautiful birds are part of a successful conservation programme which includes rare Arabian gazelles and otters.

An added attraction is the Geochrom, a walk-through tropical jungle complete with crocodiles and giant butterflies.

Dudley's famous castle has been conserved too. Re-live its turbulent past through a dramatic audio-visual show or stroll through the restored Tudor wing.

At the nearby Black Country Museum, you can visit a Victorian mine or take an unforgettable narrowboat trip deep into the caverns beneath Castle Hill.

And only a few minutes away are over twenty crystal studios including Royal Doulton, Royal Brierley and Stuart . . .

Isn't it time we spotted you here?

Discounted group rates are available. For a trade information pack please ring Dudley Economic Development Department.
Tel: 0384 453776

DUDLEY
Metropolitan Borough

Economic Development Department
7 St. James's Road Dudley
West Midlands DY1 1HP

Feed the fish

BIBURY Trout Farm is setting out to get more coach parties.

Set in the heart of beautiful Bibury in the Cotswolds, the attraction is nevertheless a fully working farm. At any time of the year, it will be raising over 300,000 fish at least five or six inches in length. Visitors are encouraged to join in and one of the most popular activities is feeding the fish.

Refreshments for the visitors themselves will be available on the farm for the first time this year. There are also picnic areas set amongst the five acres of the farm open to the public and a gift shop.

Group rates start with parties of 15 or more and are set at £1.40 per adult. Driver gets in free.

More details from Ian Peters on 0285 740215.

A friendly welcome on the coast

The animals are happy to see visitors

THE new owners of Suffolk Wildlife Park are introducing an African theme to the coastal attraction.

"The park will also remain open year round from now on," said Martin Goymour, of Goymour Developments, which also owns Banham Zoo in Norfolk. "The animals will always be here, so we will be happy to welcome visitors at any time."

There are generous discounts for groups of 15 or more. Group adult admission price is £3 adult, £2 children from five to 15 and senior citizens. The driver is given a luncheon voucher and under fives get in free.

Further details from Jayne King at Banham Zoo on 095 387 771.

Fresh outlook for groups

WHIPSNADE Wild Animal Park has produced a new publication aimed at keeping the tourism industry up-to-date.Called Outlook, the newsletter is being distributed to coach and tour operators and group travel organisers. Whipsnade marketing manager, Cathy Robinson, said: "We want to remind the travel trade that Whipsnade is 60 acres of wild animal excitement. The open paddocks provide a near natural habitat for our 3,000 animals."

Groups of ten or more qualify for discounts of around 20 per cent, which brings the admission price down to £5.60 per adult and £3.25 for children aged 4 to 15. Children under four are admitted free. Senior citizen rate is £4.50.

Contact Cathy Robinson at Whipsnade on 0582 872171.

LONDON ZOO

London's most exciting, most fascinating attraction! Get close to rare and spectacular animals from every continent: majestic tigers; Ming Ming and Bao Bao, Europe's only panda pair; Nile crocodiles; African eagles; Asiatic lions and deadly reptiles from dust-dry deserts, tropical forests and volcanic islands.

Go nocturnal in the zoo's eery Moonlight World. Go 'underwater' in the famous Aquarium (complete with sharks and piranhas). And 'go green' in the zoo's *Lifewatch* animal conservation centre (visitors can join *Lifewatch* and support worldwide animal help projects).

And, best of all, go for a full day, with lunch and shopping at the zoo's Barclay Court fountain piazza, alive with cafés, restaurants and a huge gift shop.

London Zoo '92 is a whole new experience.

Easy car/coach parking; group discounts; account billing; coach driver triple-benefits pack.

Contact Anita Waddell, zoo group visits co-ordinator on phone/fax 071 586 3910 to arrange a complimentary pre-visit ticket or open your travel trade/group visits account.

LONDON ZOO

Changes at Windsor Safari Park

COACH operators no longer have to run the gauntlet of Windsor Safari Park's infamous baboon reserve thanks to its two Safari Road Trains.

Both the Big Cat and Sergenti reserves have their own stations and a fully guided tour of each reserve takes 15 to 20 minutes. New for this year will be a funicular railway which runs past the elephant house and Livingstone Village and essentially provides a link between the bottom and top of the park.

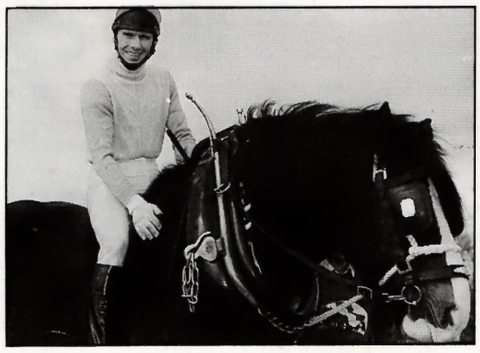
Windsor Safari Park operate a two tier group rate structure. If the group visit is booked and paid for at least two weeks advance, adults are charged at £7.50, children at £5.50. Normal group rates, without pre-payment are £7.95 adult and £5.95 child.

Both rates apply to groups of 12 or more. In both cases, the driver gets in free and is given a £5 voucher to spend on site. In addition, one free place is given out for every 20 paid for.

All group rates are all-inclusive, giving access to both reserves, the African Queen riverboat and all the park's shows: the Sea World Show, including Pantagonian Sealions and Atlantic bottle-nosed Dolphins, the Bird of Prey Show, the Parrot Show and Uthingo, a group of authentic Zulu dancers and musicians. It is also worth bearing in mind that an average visit now takes six or seven hours, so the group rates given are basically for a full day's trip.

More details and group bookings from Helena Davis on 0753 830886.

Two special packages



Peter Scudamore opened Shire Horse Centre

ALTHOUGH the Stratford upon Avon Shire Horse Centre has attracted over 40,000 visitors in about a year, it has only just been officially opened - by champion jockey Peter Scudamore (above).

During what they call the preview year, owners David and Margaret Smith have been developing and improving the attraction's facilities. Apart from 20 magnificent shire horses, the Park Farm also has rare breed domestic farm animals, aviaries, riverside walk and nature trail, childrens' playground, working demonstrations and the popular Pat a Pet.

There is a straight group discount of 10 per cent for groups over 10, which brings the adult entrance charge down to £3.15 and child's (under 16) down to £2.25. Driver gets in free.

A one hour guided tour costs £2.50 per adult.

More details from David or Maragret Smith on 0789 266276.

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PRESTON PARK
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Europe's biggest hothouse for tropical butterflies is opening very soon!

An ideal excursion
for your coach party or group.

FOR MORE DETAILS CONTACT GARETH WELSH ON 0642 850007

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The Northern Shire Horse Centre

Our paddocks and stables are home to the magnificent Pedigree Shire geldings and mares. Amongst the attractions are rare and unusual farm animals and displays of Victorian and Edwardian clothing. Set amid tranquil, grassy lanes the Farm Museum includes farming bygones, antique machinery, a farmhouse kitchen and a priceless display of harnesses.

Homemade teas will round off your memorable day. Come and see us any day except Friday or Saturday until the end of September.

Contact: Mrs D Cammidge, Northern Shire Horse Centre, Flower Hill Farm, North Newbald, Humberside YO4 3TG. Tel. (0430) 827270.

Set in 32 acres of tranquil lakes and woodland. Wetlands is home to over 100 different kinds of ducks, geese, swans, parrots, etc. from all over the world. Most of which are at liberty to mix freely with visitors and feed from the hand.

This, together with a children's farmyard of friendly pygmy goats, small sheep and rabbits, make an ideal setting for a family day out.

Ample free parking, toilets, lakeside cafe, goft shop, lakeside picnic sites, and a friendly family welcome, ensure you of a great day at a leisurely pace with nature.

Discount rates for schools, clubs, W.I.s, coaches etc

COACHES PLEASE PHONE & BOOK

OPEN 10am EVERY DAY (EXCEPT CHRISTMAS DAY)

LAST ADMISSION 5.30pm OR DUSK, WHICHEVER IS EARLIER.

Memberships available, ask for details. Evening Bookings by appointment.

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SUTTON-CUM-LOUND
RETFORD, NOTTS
DN22 8SB**

Tel. (0777) 818099

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★ FREE FERRY FARES ★
25 bedrooms ★ All with TV/tea making facilities ★ Dining room (choice of menu) ★ Licensed ent ★ Coach parking available
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SANDRA 0983 403687
★ OCTOBER DATES ALSO AVAILABLE ★
(29451/CWL)

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Telephone: Visitors – (0983) 403521
Fax (0983) 408155
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★ 36 b/rooms all en suite (with full facilities, colour TV; tea/coffee making/radio/intercom)
★ Choice of menu
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(25407/CWL)

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Special offers for your coach parties in 1992... dates still available at:
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★ 6-13 JUNE ★ 8-15 AUGUST
★ 15-22 AUGUST
★ 29 AUGUST-5 SEPTEMBER
★ 12-19 SEPTEMBER
★ 26 SEPTEMBER-3 OCTOBER
10-16 CAVENDISH PLACE EASTBOURNE, BN20 3EJ
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- All rooms have facilities 50% ground floor
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All inclusive of VAT set at 17.5%.
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X REG Bedford PJK Plaxton Supreme, 29 seater, fitted with wheelchair, lift (in door way), one owner from new, **£3,750 + VAT ono. Tel. Nigel on (0982) 570225.** (29736/BE)

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1985 B BEDFORD YNT Plaxton Paramount 3200, 53 seater, 11 metre, MoT March 1993, owned from new, excellent condition. **£22,500 + VAT ono. Tel. 0724 281177 or 282277.** (25465/BE)

1975 BEDFORD PJK, 29 seater, very clean, straight and tidy, MoT April 1993. **£3,500 ono. Tel. 0689 890079 office hours or answerphone.** (25488/BE)

SELECTION of 1976-1984 Bedford coaches. **Tel. Gwyn Williams 0874 611534/622223, 0874 730289 (eves).** (25516/BE)

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Just arrived
1977 BEDFORD 500, Duple Dominant II, 49 seater, tinted windows, air door, MoT November 1992, make me a sensible offer.
To view contact
061 976 5040
(25390/BE)

1978 YMT/ PLAXTON SUPREME, 53 seats, all white, private plates, MoT May 1993. 1979 YMT/ PLAXTON SUPREME, 53 seats, all white, private plates, MoT February 1993. **Tappins Coaches, Didcot, tel. 0235 511115.** (25391/BE)

1975 Bedford YRT Dominant Express, 53 seats, engine rebuilt, owned from new, very good condition, MoT May 1992. **£3,000 + VAT. Tel. 0352 710682, P & O Lloyd, Clwyd.** (25325/BE)

1978 T BEDFORD YLQ Plaxton Supreme, 45 seats, MoT October 1992, owned from new, good condition. **£4,750 ono + VAT. Tel. 0724 281177 or 282277.** (25457/BE)

1976 BEDFORD, 53 seater, YMT 500. **£3,950 + VAT. Tel: E.V. Wing & Sons, 0529 302473.** (25482/BE)

D REG BEDFORD YNT TURBO, 53 seats, Duple 320 body, immaculate condition, tested September, taxed. **£33,750 + VAT.** Possible part exchange for older vehicle. **Tel. 0405 860032 (North Humberside).** (25499/BE)

1980 Bedford YMT Duple Dominant, 53 seats, 12 mtr, 12 months MoT. **£8,000 ono. 1979** Bedford YMT Duple Dominant, 53 retrimmed seats, MoT March 1993. **£5,000 ono. 1979** Bedford PJK Plaxton, 29 retrimmed seats, 12 months MoT. **£5,000 ono. All plus VAT. Tel. 0484 651078.** (25399/BED)

BOVA

1982 Bova Europa, 51 recliners + courier, Telma, Webasto, MoT Nov, radio/cass/PA, owner driver, **£22,000 + VAT. Tel. (0400) 81571.** (25480/BO)

DAF

1980 DAF MB200 SUPREME IV, 57 seater, recently repanelled, test 11/9/92. Very clean, drives well. **£13,500 ono.** Part exchange for 45 or less considered. **Tel: 0788 811599.** (25400/DAF)

DAF

1986 AUG DAF
Plaxton SB 2300, 57 seats, long test.
£42,000 + VAT

1988 DAF
Plaxton SB 2300, 55 seats, long test.
£48,000 + VAT

Finance arranged subject to status

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1979 35 SEATER FORD DUPLE
Re-upholstered seats, resprayed white, new test, beautiful condition, bargain at
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1980 FORD CAETANO
35 seats, modern red stripe moquette, nice coach, test Aug.
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Twin tanks, side lockers, clean and reliable, all white, unlettered, taxed Sept, tested Dec '92.
£5,500 + VAT ono
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LEYLAND LEOPARD SUPREME 1980, 12 months MoT, good condition throughout, reconditioned engine, very reliable vehicle. **£11,750 + VAT ono.**

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£8,750 + VAT.

Tel: 0602 297546
(25338/LE)

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P & R registrations with MoT, 11 metre, single door.

Tel: 0292 312312
(25460/LE)

1981 LEYLAND CUB, automatic, 31 seater Duple Service Bus, MoT April 1993. **£6,500 ono + VAT. Tel. 069 887 207/337.** (25303/LE)

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76 seats, choice of two, MoT 22.5.92 & 7.7.92.
Price £2,200 and £2,500

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68 seats, MoT 29.2.92.
£2,200

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£21,000 + VAT
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(29400/LAG/PIC)

LEYLAND

1978 LEYLAND LEOPARD
Semi-auto, Plaxton 12m, 57 seater, MoT Jan '93.
£6,350 + VAT

1978 LEYLAND LEOPARD
Semi-auto, Plaxton 11m, 53 seater, MoT March '93.
£6,250 + VAT

Tel. Hertford (0992) 586302
(29728/LEY)

LEYLAND CUB

1985 B REG

Bodies by Reeve Burgess, 28 seats and rear Ratcliffe tail lift, very low mileage, taxed, 12 months test, resprayed white.

£7,950 + VAT ovno
Tel: 0785 760666/0831 841523
(25493/LE)

LEYLAND Leopard Duple Dominant Express, 1979, T reg, 53 seats, MoT May 1992. **£4,750 + VAT. Tel. 0272 710251.** (25339/LE)

1977 LEYLAND LEOPARDS

S Reg, October, MoT Oct & Nov 1992. Express doors, 49 d/p seats, Dominant I, semi-auto.

£5,250 + VAT
Tel. (0642) 463300 or 316652. 091 587 1702 Middlesbrough
(25491/LE)

1987 Leyland Tiger 245, 6 speed, ZF Plaxton 3200, Mk II, 57 seats, usual extras, low mileage, owned from new, MoT February 1993, excellent condition. **£39,500 + VAT. Tel. 0352 710682, P & O Lloyd, Clwyd.** (25324/LE)

2 X 1978 LEYLAND LEOPARDS SUPREME, 55 seaters, 12 metre, semi auto, Webasto heater, POD, radio cassette PA, all white, recent retrim, private plates, MoT December 1992 and March 1993. **£9,000 + VAT each. Tel. 0344 412302.** (25468/LE)

LEYLAND LEOPARD, 1976, manual box, Alexandra Y-type body, 53 seats, Pormo heating, MoT, choice of three. **£3,500 each + VAT. Tel. 041 956 3636.** (25492/LE)

LEYLAND

1973 NATIONAL MARK I, 52 seats/23 standees, single door, all white, very good order for age, we owned it for 5+ years, MoT June 1992. **Tappins Coaches, Didcot, tel. 0235 511115.** (25392/LE)

1976 Leyland Leopard, 53 str, Plaxton Mk3, MoT March '93, new floor covering, engine overhauled '91, **£6,000 ono + VAT. Tel. (0400) 81571.** (25481/LE)

MAN

1987 MAN

16-280 Caetano Algarve HDH 3.55 metres. Private plate, 49-53 recliners, toilet, drinks, curtains, TV video, courier seat, continental door, driver's bunk. Immaculate condition.

£44,000 ono + VAT
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(25500/MAN)

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1982 Man Van Hool Acron, 49 seater Exec, TV, video, toilet, coffee machine, fridge, 1 year's MoT, sprayed to your colours. Would consider part exchange.

£29,995 + VAT
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(25451/MAN)

MAN Hi/Liner late 1982, new MoT, full executive plus video, very good condition. Part exchange Leopard Plaxton 11 metre or **£25,000. Tel. (0728) 830358.** (25467/MAN)

MIDIBUS

1987 D REG DODGE/RENAULT

East Lancs body, 29 seats (3 standing). Machine stand. Painted white. MoT January 1993. Fully automatic gearbox.
Choice of two.
£9,500 + VAT
KETTLEWELLS (Retford) Ltd
0777 860360
Contact Paul Kettlewell
(25472/MIDI)

MERCEDES

1988 (F) 609D coach, 20 seats plus courier, low mileage, radio, PA, tinted windows, large boot, tested until July '92, **£15,500 + VAT. Tel. (0482) 28473.** (25377/MB)

1991 MERCEDES 814D PMT AMi, 33 seater, large seats, boot, power door, Purmo heating, radio/PA, MoT February 1993. **£37,000 + VAT. Tel. 0556 68250.** (25485/MER)

MERCEDES 508 LWB 1982, 16 high back seat minicoach, tax and PSV test April 1992, white, unwritten, 4 new tyres. **£3,500 + VAT. Tel. Nottingham 0602 483906.** (29721/MER)

PMT ENGINEERING

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2 Mercedes Benz 811 33 seat midicoaches.

For further details contact:
Helen Bailey, PMT Engineering Ltd, Woodhouse Street, Stoke on Trent ST4 1EQ
Tel. 0782 744744
(29724/MER)

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F REG MERCEDES 609D, 24 seat semi Exec, two tables, curtains, PA, forced air, radio/cassette, deep boot, Europa conversion, MoT until July 1992, excellent condition inside and out.

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Will consider part exchange
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0494 816773 home
(25498/MER)

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1990 Caetano/Optimo 19 seat in very nice condition **£29,500**

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(23544/VS)

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16 high backs, 2.5Di engine, new Ford gearbox and clutch. 6 new tyres. MoT Dec '92.
£4,250 + VAT
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061 628 4210 Eves
(25487/MB)

SHERPA 310, 17 seat minibus, B Registration, Class Five, until August 1992, private use only, 50,000 miles, first class condition inside and out, unwritten. **£2,850. Tel. 0983 298538.** (25489/MB)

1985 MERCEDES 608D
21 seater, PMT conversion, full size Vogel seats, parcel racks, radio etc, good reliable vehicle
£8,000 + VAT ono

1988 FORD TRANSIT
12 seater, non PSV, new tax and MoT
£3,100 + VAT to clear

Tel. (0952) 244198
(25477/MB)

1989 F Reg Ford Transit PSV Diesel overdrive, 20 + 3 seats with underfloor heating, mileage 194,000, excellent condition. **£12,000 + VAT. Notts/Lincs area. Tel. 0636 893438.** (25497/MB)

1986 D REG FORD Transit LWB, new shape, 15 seater, petrol, good condition, COF 1993. **£4,500 + VAT. Tel. 091 265 6747.** (25496/MB)

FORD TRANSIT 1983, 12 moquette upholstered seats, diesel, overdrive, Bristol dome, MoT, roof vent, Tacho, radio, saloon heater. **£3,500 part exchange considered. Tel. Sudbury 0787 79261.** (25490/MB)

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All body types and specification purchased for cash, any condition, immediate settlement.
TRAMONTANA C.D. LTD
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(25464/VO)

MARCH 1988 (E) Volvo B10M Ikarus Blue Danube Highliner, 49 reclining seats, power door, continental door, centre sunken toilet, double glazed, wired TV/video, radio/PA/cassette, MoT Feb 1993 ..... **£53,500**

AUG 1988 (F) Volvo B10M Ikarus Blue Danube Highliner, 49 reclining seats, power door, continental door, centre sunken toilet, water boiler, double glazed, wired TV/video, radio cassette/PA, MoT Nov 1992 **£67,500**

1987 PRIVATE PLATE Volvo B10M Plaxton Paramount 3500, 49/51 recliners, rear demountable toilet, MoT Feb '93, all white, radio/cassette/PA..... **£55,000**

Tel. (0993) 771445
or out of hours (0993) 844377
(25396/VO)

1982 VOLVO B10M
44 recliners, servery, toilet, courier seat, MoT January 1993, new tyres all round.
Bargain at £19,500 + VAT
Tel. (05672) 807
(25466/VO)

1989 F REG VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 49/53 recliners + courier, toilet/coffee machine, wired for TV, video ..... **£68,500 + VAT**

1988 E REG VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE H, 50 recliners + courier, servery, toilet, wired for TV, video ..... **£65,000 + VAT**

Tel. (0294) 605454
(25350/VO)

19876 VOLVO B58 DUPLE Dominant I (PP), 53 seats, recent exchange gearbox plus extra engine, clean throughout, MoT September 1992. **£4,995 + VAT ono. Tel. 0772 749358.** (25484/VO)

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SEPTEMBER 1990, H REG MERCEDES 408, 15 seat minibus, MoT August 1992 **£17,250**

SEPTEMBER 1990, H REG MERCEDES 709, 21 seats, 49,750 ks only, MoT August 1992 **£22,500**

SEPTEMBER 1990, H REG MERCEDES 609, 21 seats, MoT August 1992 **£22,250**

MAY 1991, H REG MERCEDES 609, 19 seats, D/P coach, MoT May 1992 **£27,500**

H REG MERCEDES 410, 15 seats, new conversion, 12 months MoT **£17,950**

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20 seats plus courier, one table, centre carpet, PA/radio/cassette, power door, speed limiter, very good condition, below average mileage.
£26,500
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MoT 9.2.93
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15 seat including driver Minibus on Ford Transit 150 Diesel. Specification includes high back seats in moquette, fully trimmed interior, speakers to rear, roof ventilator, COIF.
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V REG B58 DOMINANT II, 53 seats, arriving this week, phone for details.

1982 MAN SOLD 49 seats, full spec **£20,950 + VAT**

1982 VOLVO B10M Viewmaster, 45 recliners, full exec, 11 mtr, tested Jan '93..... **£23,950 + VAT**

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FULL INSPECTION FACILITIES
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18/20 seats, D registered, mostly in ticket.
£4,000 + VAT ono each

For further information contact Ted Green

(0492) 592111
(25425/VS)

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1983 DAF MOSELEY ALPHA GT, 49 seater recliners, full executive spec, resprayed and new MoT..... **POA**
1983 DAF BOVA EUROPA, 53 seater recliners, MoT..... **POA**
1974 BRISTOL DOUBLE DECKER, professionally panelled throughout, ideal show bus or mobile display, MoT..... **POA**

C.A. VEHICLES LTD
0793 752251 days or 751248
(25495/VS)

MAN SR280 Highliner, private plate, MoT Dec 1992, toilet, TV, video, drinks machine, fridge, radio PA system, tinted windows, roller blinds, 47/49 reclining seats, first class order..... **£19,000 ono**

FORD PLAXTON SUPREME IV, V Reg, MoT May 1993, tinted windows, curtains, side lockers, radio PA, power door, finished in two pack, 53 fixed seats, very good condition..... **£5,250 ono**

FORD DUPLE DOMINANT, V Reg, MoT Feb '93, side lockers, radio PA system, power door, 45 fixed seats, recent recon engine, very good condition..... **£5,250 ono**

FORD DUPLE DOMINANT, V Reg, MoT April 1993, radio PA system, power door, 33 fixed seats, recent recon engine, very good condition..... **£5,250 ono**

FORD PLAXTON, L Reg, MoT Nov 1992, side lockers, radio PA system, recon engine and gearbox Feb 1992, must be one of the tidiest Fords for its age..... **£3,000 ono**

LEYLAND DOUBLE DECKER 680, 73 seats, recon gearbox, first class condition for age, used every day on school contract..... **£2,500 ono**

Tel. (0896) 55577
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1992 MAZDA DIESEL, 15 seater, less than 1,000 miles, high back moquette seats, roof lining, non-slip floor, sunroof, radio cassette, our own demo, only..... **£11,950 + VAT**

1992 MAZDA DIESEL, 12 seater in white, reclining high back moquette seats, carpets, roof linings, radio cassette, rear speakers, thermostat controlled rear heater, less than 500 miles, cancelled order, only..... **£11,995 + VAT**

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All vehicles 3 years, 60,000 miles warranty from date of registration

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Ask for Malcolm
(25494/VS)

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1175 ARGYLE STREET, GLASGOW
All Mercedes 2 years warranty or 200,000 kilometres

NEW MERCEDES 709D, coachbuilt, 29 + 10 Dip Tac standees, power service door **stock.**

NEW MERCEDES 811D Coachbuilt, 33 service seats, wide entrance, p door, 12 standees. **3 weeks.**

NEW MERCEDES 814D Coachbuilt, 33 luxury, armrest, boot racks, power door. **Stock.**

NEW MERCEDES 609D, 24 seats, full spec, boot, power door, lug rack, radio cassette. Also 26 manual plus door in **stock**

NEW MERCEDES 410 and 408D, 16 high back face forward seats. **Stock.**

NEW MERCEDES 814D, coach built, 33 luxury, power swivel door, large boot, **stock.**
NEW MERCEDES 811, 33 + 12 standees, **3 weeks.**
NEW MERCEDES 709, manual, 29 + 10 standees, **stock.**
NEW MERC 609D, 26 sts, coach spec, **stock.**
NEW MERC 609D, 24 c/seats, p/door, boot, **stock**
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87 MERCEDES 814D, 29 seats, boot, coach spec.

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84 MAN VAN HOOL, Astron, 57 seats, Executive, testing.

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83 TRANSIT 15 seat diesel, non PSV.
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82 B10 GOLDLINER, 46, toilet, tested.

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1986 (D) DODGE Alexander built, 21 seats, 6 standees, automatic, power door, choice of three, MoTs October 1992.
1986 (D) MERCEDES 608D, Alexander conversion, 21 seats, 6 standees, power door, choice of two, MoT March 1993.
1985 (B) LEYLAND TIGER CUB, Duple Dominant bus body, Allison automatic gearbox, 29 coach seats, 8 standees, choice of two, MoTs July 1992.
1981 (X) LEYLAND TIGER CUB, Duple Dominant bus body, Allison automatic gearbox, 31 seats, 8 standees, MoT December 1992.
1981 (W) MERCEDES 207D, 12 seats, MoT April 1992.
1985 (B) LEYLAND TIGER 245 Duple Laser II, 49 seats, toilet, power door, semi-auto, choice of two, MoTs September & December 1992.
1985 (B) VOLVO B10M, Plaxton Paramount 3500, 51 seats, toilet, ZF auto gearbox, MoT February 1993.
1984 (A) MAN SR280, 53 reclining seats, rear continental door, Webasto, power door, radio/PA, MoT February 1993.
1981 (X) FORD 360T Plaxton Supreme V, 53 seats, power door, tinted windows, MoT February 1993.
1981 (X) BEDFORD YMP Plaxton Supreme IV, 10 metre, 45 seats, power door, MoT October 1992.
1979 (T) VOLVO Plaxton Supreme IV, 50 reclining seats, power door, Telma.
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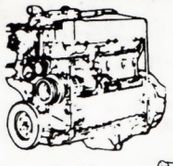

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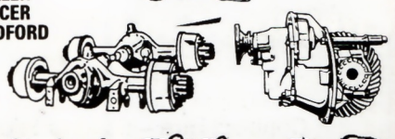

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STRATEGIES FOR MINI AND MIDI BUS OPERATIONS IN THE 90's
FRIDAY MAY 29th

Course Organiser T.S. Mervyn Jones

This fifth annual symposium will concentrate on two most important aspects of Mini and Midi bus operation in the United Kingdom. Firstly the 'learning curve' (especially post 'bus deregulation') built up by the leading Mini and Midi bus operators, including London Buses.

Secondly the strategies which are now advocated and considered most appropriate for the 90's, for successful Mini and Midi bus operation. An academic and comparative overview of Mini and Midi bus operation to date will also be presented. This is a meeting that no serious bus operator can afford to miss!

The course should also be of particular interest to:-

- local councillors and officials concerned with transport
- central government officials
- transport researchers
- transport consultants
- local transport consumer groups

Course fee: £105 including notes and all refreshments.

Enquiries: **Mrs Debbie Hodges**
Dept of Civil Engineering
City University
Northampton Square
LONDON EC1V 0HB

Telephone: 071-477 8156
Fax. 071-253 3857

SYMPOSIUM PROGRAMME

1. Cost-Benefit Analysis of Mini Bus operations (including overseas operators)
   P R White Senior Lecturer Polytechnic of Central London
2. How to be successful at running a minibus operation
   Janet Blundred, Manager Thames Transit
3. Fully Accessible Midi bus operation – the social and political perspective
   Dave Wetzil (ex GLC chairman of the Transport Committee)
4. Kentish Bus – the 'learning curve' of minibus operation (including the Docklands operation)
   B Hurst General Manager Kentish Bus and Coach
5. Midi Bus Operation in Hounslow and Kingston – the lessons learnt
   Andy Halliday and Jeff Chamberlain operations managers
6. The CentreWest Midi Bus operations past, present and future strategies
   Peter Hendy, Managing Director, CentreWest London Buses Ltd
7. Taking the bus industry into the year 2000, the role for Midi and Mini bus oprations
   H Blundred Executive Director, Thames Holdings PLC

(25515/CONF)

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Western National are looking for an enthusiastic person preferably computer literate to be responsible for the planning and development of the bus service network in Cornwall. Other responsibilities include scheduling of vehicles and drivers, production of management reports pricing of tenders, production of publicity.

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Written applications, including full C.V., should be made to:

Mr P.M. Grimes
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Cumberland Motor Services Limited
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Tangier Street
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Cumbria CA28 7XF

Applications should be received no later than Monday 4th May 1992.

(25519/APP)

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Salary and benefits according to experience.

Applications in writing enclosing CV to:

Steve Whiteway
Group Operations Manager
Epsom Coaches
Blenheim Road
Epsom, Surrey KT19 9AF

(25424/APP)

SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL

TRANSPORT ACT 1985

1. RESULTS OF A FURTHER ROUND OF TENDERING FOR LOCAL BUS SERVICES

The County Council has completed its consideration of a further round of Tenders invited for local bus services. The tenders involved are as follows:

14/412 Witham Friary – Westbury 14/465 Witham Friary – Frome

The information to be published, in accordance with the Transport Act 1985, is available to the general public at the ten main branches of the County Library until 30 June 1992. It is also available at County Hall, Taunton between the hours of 0930 and 1630; anyone wishing to inspect the schedules should go to the Reception Area of Floor 5 (Department for the Environment) and ask for the Public Transport Section.

2. POTENTIAL CONTRACTORS FOR LOCAL BUS SERVICES

The County Council is revising its list of potential contractors for local bus services. Any operator who wishes to be included on the list should write to the Department for the Environment, Public Transport Section, County Hall, Taunton, Somerset TA1 4DY stating full name and address and PSV Operators Licence Number, if held.

Please note when applying for or submitting tenders, that a licence number must be held before a contract can be awarded.

Director for the Environment
PT/18/120/CES
6th April 1992

(25378/TE)

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You are most welcome to telephone David Lovell on (0225) 753641 ext. 3451 for an informal discussion.

For further information and an application form, telephone Trowbridge (0225) 751342 (24 hour answering service), or write to:- The Director, Department of Planning and Highways, Wiltshire County Council, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8JD. Closing date: 1st May 1992. Please quote Reference 92/199.

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Written applications, including full CV, should be made to:

Mr A M Warrington, Managing Director
Redbridge Engineering Ltd
Redbridge House, Holmfield Lane, Thornes,
Wakefield, W Yorks WF2 7AD
Or telephone 0924 369946

(25483/APP)

Germany guides

A DELEGATION from Grampian Regional Transport, which is to take delivery of a £200,000 articulated Mercedes 0405G bus later this year, has just returned from a fact-finding mission to Germany.

The six-strong team, led by engineering director, **Gordon Mills**, travelled from Dusseldorf Airport in an articulated bus operated by EVAG, the Essen bus and tram operator. Once in Essen, the bus entered the guided bus system - particularly interesting for the Grampian group as their soon to be delivered vehicle will be equipped to travel on such a system.

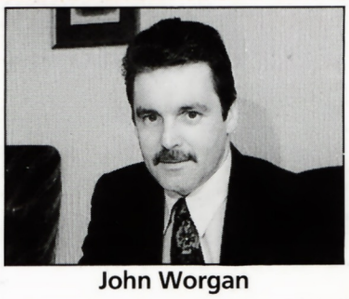
Pictured above from left to right are: Sandy Thomson (Walter Alexander); Hans Van Dijk (Mercedes); Ian Soden (Mercedes UK); Jim Barclay (GRT); Martyn Pearson (GRT); Andy Rutherford (GRT); Gordon Mils (GRT); Brian Milne (GRT); George Mair (GRT); Horst Botz (Mercedes); Manfred Orth (EVAG).

Crystals promotes

CRYSTALS Conversions has promoted **John Worgan** as general manager of its Doncaster factory.

The 38-year-old has worked for Crystals for four years and seen the Doncater-based company expand throughout them. It has been among the first minibus manufacturers to achieve BS5750 for its quality.

Mr Worgan will oversee manufacture of both Crystals own designs and the recently acquired Europa Coachworks conversions, the jigs and tools for which were bought after the collapse of the CG Whittaker group.



John Worgan

Rifkind out

THE Tories' post-election cabinet reshuffle has ousted Scottish barrister **Malcolm Rifkind** from the Transport Secretary's post and installed former Commons Leader **John MacGregor** in his place.

The new Transport Secretary is MP for Norfolk South. The 55-year-old's political career began as a special assistant to Alec Douglas Home, and has included posts as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Industry, Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, and Secretary of State for Education and Science. His hobbies include conjuring.

Mr Rifkind has become Defence Secretary. **Michael Portillo**, a previous public transport minister is now chief secretary to the treasury.

The Bus and Coach Council said it had already written to Mr MacGregor, asking for an early meeting with him, but said it regretted the changes at the DTp.

"We are aiming at a constantly moving target," said a BCC spokesman. "Each new secretary of state comes in with different promises.

Rt Hon Malcolm Rifkind

"Individually, they each make commitments to the industry but these decisions are not binding on their successor."

Chris Chope, Minister of Traffic, loses his post with his seat. A bigger worry for the BCC was the possible replacement of Public Transport Minister **Roger Freeman**, with whom the BCC says it has built a constructive relationship.

"Mr Freeman is conciencious. If has said he will do something, he will, and he doesn't take on tasks he cannot complete," said the BCC spokesman.

Railman becomes professor

A SENIOR British Rail manager is to become professor of Transport Management at the University of Salford.

Hugh Jenkins, 57, leaves BR as director of human resource development to take up the new post on June 1.

Mr Jenkins will continue to be an associate director of Transmark (Transportation Systems and Market Research Limited), BR's international consultancy subsidiary, where he was previously managing director.

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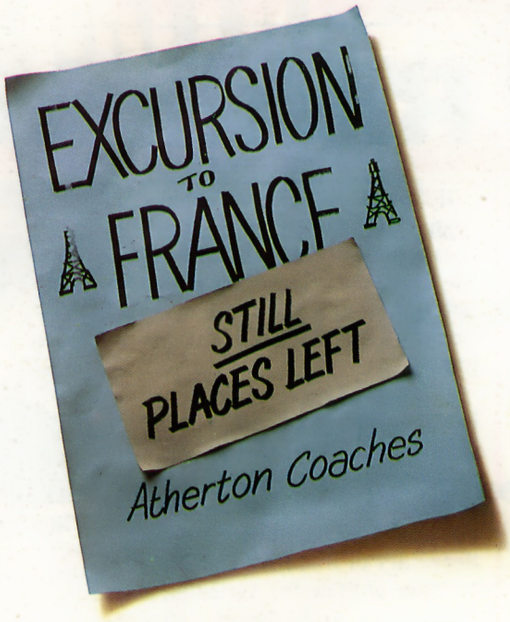

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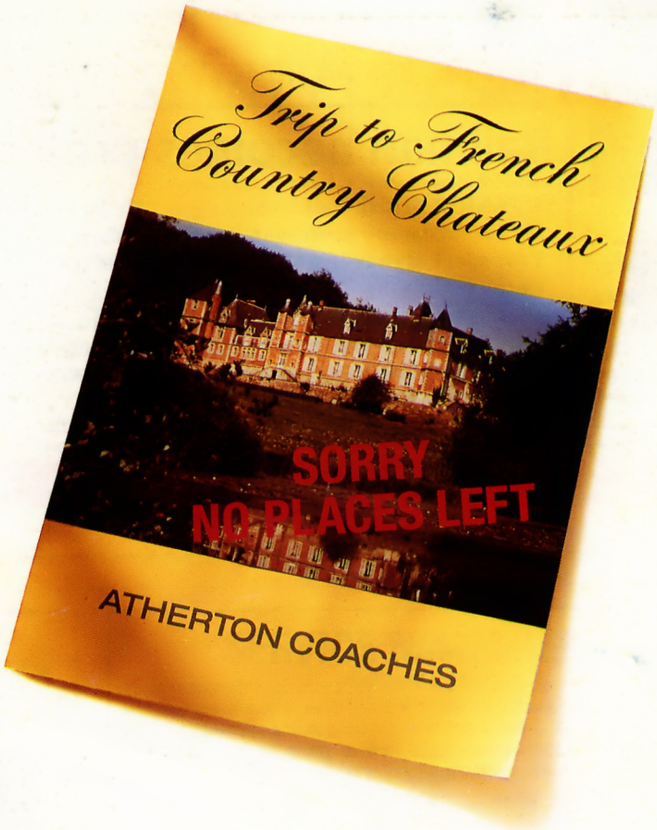

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